



Strategic Plan for Implementing

THE MAINE NATURE TOURISM INITIATIVE - SEPTEMBER 2005





Prepared by

FERMATA, Inc.

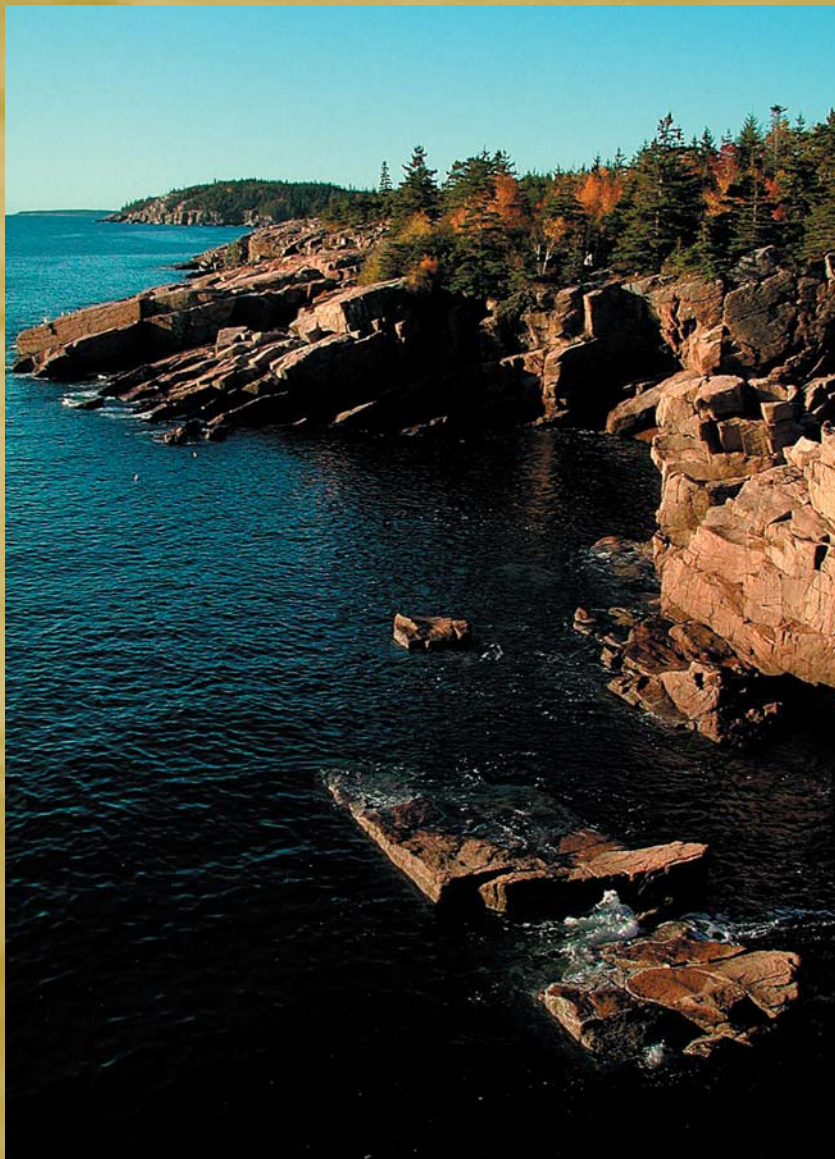
Business Office

P.O. Box 196

Poultney, VT 05764

Prepared for:

The State of Maine



FERMATA, Inc.
Strategic Plan for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative
September 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	2
Background	2
Project Goals	2
Vision.....	2
Overall strategy for the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative	3
FERMATA's Approach	3
VISITOR PROFILE.....	4
Experiential Tourism: An Evolving Sector	4
What Experiential Tourists Do.....	4
ASSESSMENTS.....	6
Maine Highlands Region	6
Western Mountains Region.....	10
Downeast Region.....	12
FINDINGS.....	16
INTERPRETIVE THEMATIC FRAMEWORK.....	19
Overarching Theme: Living On The Edge.....	20
Sub-Theme #1: Innovative By Nature.....	20
Sub-Theme #2: State Of Connectedness.....	20
Sub-Theme #3: Maine In The World.....	21
RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR ACTION.....	22
ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION.....	22
ADDITIONAL INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT.....	24
ITINERARIES.....	24
HIGHWAY SIGNAGE TO SUPPORT ITINERARIES.....	29
INTERPRETATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.....	31
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS.....	35
VISITOR SUPPORT SERVICES ASSISTANCE.....	37
LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.....	39
ADDITIONAL STUDIES RECOMMENDED.....	40
Maine Woods National Heritage Area Feasibility Study	40
Compensation for private landowners for use of their lands for outdoor recreation	42
Carrying capacity of resources and communities for increased visitation.....	42
Possibility and feasibility for certification of nature tourism operators.....	42
Identify land acquisition opportunities needed to support expanded nature tourism offerings	43
SELECTED LIST OF PLANS AND STUDIES THAT INFORMED THIS STRATEGIC PLAN.....	44
APPENDICES.....	45

FERMATA, Inc.
Strategic Plan for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative
September 2005

INTRODUCTION

Background

The nature-based tourism discussion in the state of Maine was prompted by issues raised at the November 2003 Blaine House Conference on Maine's Natural Resource-based Industries. In September 2004, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) retained FERMATA, Inc., a nationally-known experiential tourism development consulting firm, to assess Maine's opportunities in nature-based tourism; one of the fastest growing niches in the travel industry. Governor John Baldacci has provided leadership for the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative throughout the entire project.

FERMATA, Inc. worked with state agency representatives, members of various state level organizations with interests in tourism and natural resources, and stakeholders in three rural pilot project areas: the Western Mountains, the Highlands, and Downeast. In addition to DECD and the Maine Office of Tourism, several other state agencies are supporting this project including DOT, Department of Agriculture, Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, and DOC - making this a key administration initiative. Project guidance is provided by the Natural Resources Committee (NRC) of the Maine Tourism Commission, Donna Fichtner Chair. Regional project support is by Roger Merchant (Highlands), Bruce Hazard (Western Mountains), and Judy East (Downeast).

Project Goals

1. Demonstrate how nature-based tourism development can be planned and implemented across the entire state.
2. Establish the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative as one of the administration's key strategies for rural economic development through job creation and tax revenue generation.
3. Provide a framework to support and compliment local and regional experiential tourism development efforts.
4. Furnish Maine visitors with accurate and comprehensive information on opportunities to experience the state's unique natural, historical, and cultural resources.

Vision

Experiential tourism enables rural communities to take advantage of their region's heritage, culture, and natural resources in new ways while also supporting traditional resource-based activities. It also enhances and diversifies traditional natural resource-based industries. Given the array of marketable travel and recreational experiences available throughout the Maine Woods, efforts to support experiential tourism service providers should result in net new dollars coming in to support rural, local economies.

Coordination and implementation of the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative actions is expected to be led largely by local coalitions of tourism promotion agencies and other stakeholders with support and local capacity development assistance from appropriate state agencies and others as needed.

While it has assumed several responsibilities since its creation, the initial purpose for the Maine Tourism Commission's Natural Resources Committee (NRC) was to develop a better understanding of the relationship between tourism and Maine's natural resources and related industries. The NRC developed a set of Guiding Principles for Experiential Tourism Development in Maine. See Appendix.

Guiding Principles for Experiential Tourism Development in Maine

(August 2005 NRC Draft)

"These Principles have been identified as those key considerations that should guide discussion at the state, regional, and local level concerning the opportunities and challenges that come with experiential tourism development. In developing these Principles, the NRC hopes to enhance the thoroughness of the deliberations that invariably accompany development discussions by identifying in advance the considerations that should be factored equally into the policy-making processes at all levels.

State Support of Experiential Tourism Businesses

Community Commitment to Planning

Statewide Tourism Planning and Development

The Role of the Office of Tourism - Marketing

The Role of the Office of Tourism - Ecotourism Quality Labeling

The Role of the Office of Tourism - Product Development

Cross-sector cooperation (networking) and coordinated strategic planning

Public/Private Financial support

Public/Private Access Opportunities and Partnerships:

Developing an Understanding of Carrying Capacity

Education: Business Outreach and Frontline Worker Training

Overall strategy for the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative

It is important to recognize that the three initial pilot regions were a way of getting started looking at opportunities for nature-based tourism in the state of Maine. However, implementation efforts need to focus on state-wide initiatives to the extent possible (for example, training on hospitality for Maine nature tourism visitors and on *The Maine Woods Experience* messages can be offered to all appropriate businesses, not just those located in one of the three pilot regions). Where implementation does take place in one or more of the three pilot regions, then implementation projects need to be designed so that they can serve as models for eventual implementation in other regions (for example, the format and style for the guidebook for the Moosehead - Katahdin area itinerary will be utilized for subsequent guides in the other pilot regions and in the other regions of the state).

FERMATA's Approach

FERMATA conducted a detailed inventory and assessment of the natural resource-based tourism offerings in the three regions. FERMATA also assessed cultural and historical offerings that are connected to natural resources that enrich visitor experiences by framing the experience within the natural world. FERMATA analyzed "gaps" in tourism product offerings in the three regions and assessed the feasibility of creating additional products that reflect the regional identity and community appropriateness. FERMATA inventoried lodging, dining, outfitting, and guiding services in the three regions

VISITOR PROFILE

Experiential Tourism: An Evolving Sector

At once recreational and educational, experiential tourism revolves around venues and activities that allow tourists to be active participants in (rather than only passive beneficiaries of) their travel experiences. Experiential tourism relies on *in situ* natural, cultural, and historical resources, and helps people learn not only about the world around them but about themselves as well. It includes activities that draw people outdoors such as birding and other wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, learning about the history of a region, and nature photography, in addition to other cultural, historical, or nature-based activities.

While individual travel interests may differ, experiential tourists are all bound together by the shared goal of engaging in activities from which they can develop a deeper understanding of a region, its unique natural attributes, and its local history and culture.

In recent years, a variety of tourism market studies have documented the traveling public's increasing desire for experiences that allow them to learn first-hand the lifestyle, culture, and history of rural areas. For example, according to the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), 48% of U.S. travelers are interested in visiting a place that is "remote and untouched." Moreover, 57% are attracted by an area's "culture," and 76% of U.S. travelers state that they "would like to visit someplace they have never visited before" (TIA 2002).

TIA research also shows that cultural and historic tourists, as well as tourists whose main purpose is to learn about new places, constitute a significant portion of the American travel market. For example, recent TIA studies demonstrate that 81 percent of U.S. adults who traveled in the past year, or 118 million tourists, are considered historical/cultural travelers. These travelers included historical or cultural activities on almost 217 million person-trips last year, up 13 percent from 192 million in 1996. At the same time, 30.2 million adults have taken an educational trip in the past three years, and 18% of travelers in the past year said that taking such a trip was the main purpose of their travel (TIA 2003).

What Experiential Tourists Do

Numerous market segments or niches come under the experiential tourism umbrella, many of which are among those most rapidly expanding within the general tourism market. For example, wildlife-associated recreation, as opposed to outdoor recreation in general, now involves millions of Americans in hunting, fishing and a variety of non-consumptive activities such as birding, bird feeding, and wildlife photography.

In 2000, the National Survey of Recreation and the Environment compiled data indicating that in the previous year "an estimated 129 million people took the time to stop and observe the natural scenery around them and an estimated 96 million people also took the time to view wildlife or wildflowers, while 71.2 million people viewed birds." In 2004, these numbers rose to 151 million people viewing natural scenery, 125 million viewing or photographing wildlife, and 122 million viewing/photographing wildflowers.

Moreover, Fermata's own research indicates that experiential tourists look for five primary opportunities when choosing a destination: to enjoy the sights, smells, and sounds of nature; to be outdoors; to see wildlife species not seen before; to get away from the demands of everyday

life; and for family recreation (Eubanks, Ditton & Stoll, 2000).

In addition to the sights and sounds of nature, the TIA report, *Geotourism: The New Trend in Travel* (2003), points out that “authenticity is a primary theme when examining travelers wants and needs”. Four in ten (41%) travelers say their experience is better when they can see and do something authentic (as opposed to those travel experiences that are constructed). In addition, half of all travelers prefer to experience the local culture (49%) and support local businesses (49%) at their destinations. Finally, the TIA also reports that, in general terms, enrichment, health/revitalization/enhancement, and eco-tourism/soft adventure are among the tourism areas most likely to grow in the U.S. market (TIA 1998).

ASSESSMENTS

Maine Highlands Region

Thirty-eight sites were evaluated in the Highlands region of Maine. The sites covered an area from Pittston Farm to Scraggly Lake in the north, Patten Lumber Museum and Medway Recreational Park in the East, Pleasant River Walk and Peaks-Kenny State Park in the South, and West Shirley Bog in the West.

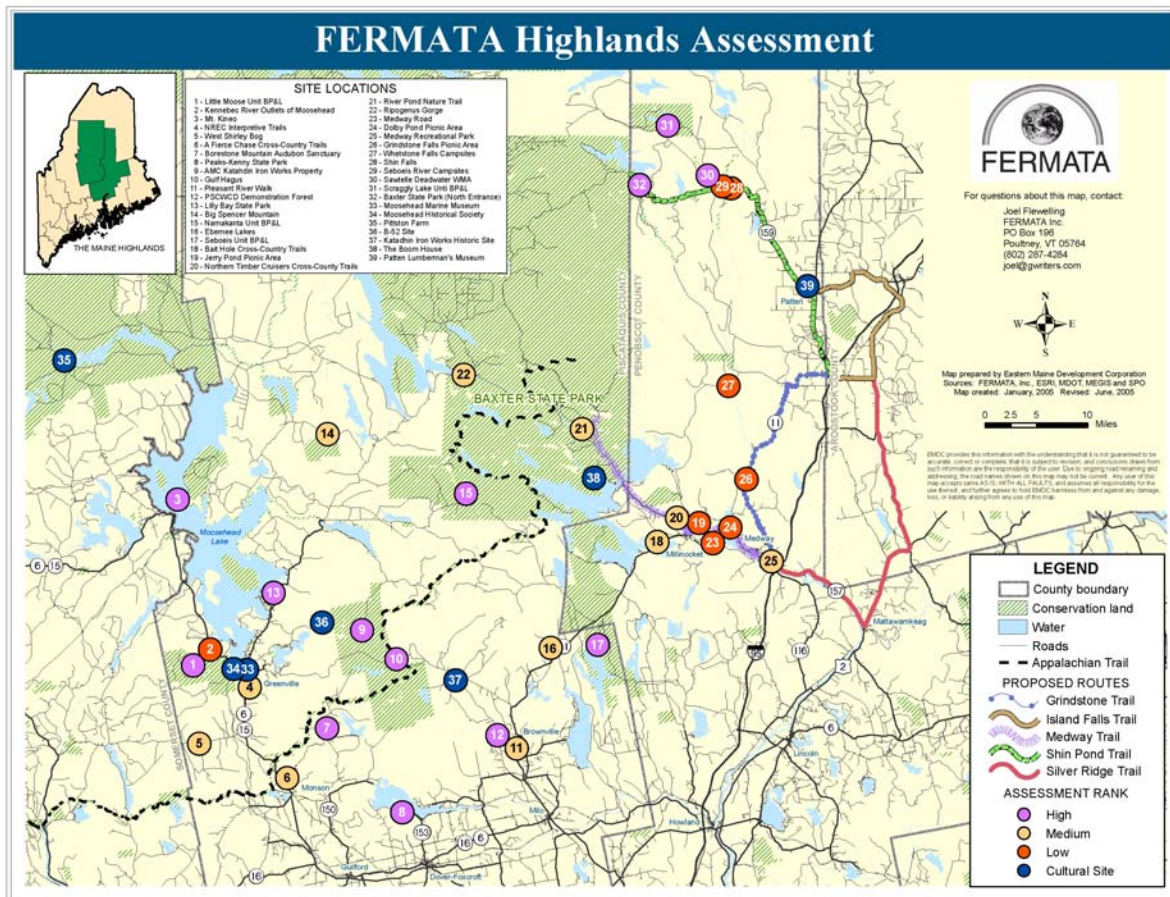
All of the sites were ranked according to their ASAP scores. ASAP is an assessment tool developed by FERMATA and stands for Applied Site Assessment Protocol that evaluates the nature tourism values of the site. The highest score possible is a 115. The highest score in the highlands region was 95 and the lowest score was 60.

The following table lists all of the sites that were evaluated by FERMATA assessors. Details are found in the Appendix. People who attended community meetings held in September 2004 and others interested in the project nominated the sites that were evaluated. The table also includes if they were recommended for inclusion in a tourism guide and the level of improvements FERMATA recommends. A number of sites are also named in the proposed Moosehead Birding Trail, part of the Maine Birding Trail initiative. These are indicated as well.

Map Number	Site Name	Summary of FERMATA Recommendations	Maine Birding Trail Site
1	Little Moose Unit BP&L	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
2	Kennebec River Outlets of Moosehead Lake	Not recommended for inclusion in marketing platform	Yes
3	Mount Kineo	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
4	NREC Interpretive Trails	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
5	West Shirley Bog	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
6	A Fierce Chase X-C Trails	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements	No
7	Borestone Mountain Audubon Sanctuary	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
8	Peaks-Kenny State Park	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes

9	AMC Katahdin Iron Works Property	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
10	Gulf Hagus	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
11	Pleasant River Walk	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
12	PCSWCD Demonstration Forest	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
13	Lilly Bay State Park	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
14	Big Spencer Mountain	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements	Yes
15	Namakanta Unit BP&L	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
16	Ebemee Lakes	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
33	Moosehead Marine Museum	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform.	No
34	Moosehead Historical Museum	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform.	No
35	Pittston Farm	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	Yes
36	B-52 Site	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	Yes
37	Katahdin Iron Works Historic Site	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
17	Seboies Unit BP&L	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
18	Bait Hole X-C Trails	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
19	Jerry Pond Picnic Area	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No

20	Northern Timber Cruisers X-C Trails	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
21	River Pond Nature Trail	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
22	Ripogenus Gorge	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
23	Medway Road	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
24	Dolby Pond Picnic Area	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
25	Medway Recreational Park	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
26	Grindstone Falls Picnic Area	Not Recommended	No
27	Whetstone Falls Campsites	Not Recommended	No
28	Shin Falls	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.	No
29	Seboies River Campsite	Not Recommended	No
30	Sawtelle Deadwater WMA	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
31	Scraggly Lake Unit BP&L	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
32	Baxter State Park North Entrance	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
38	The Boom House	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No
39	Patten Lumber Museum	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements	No



The Nature Conservancy recently acquired a 41,000-acre area known as the Debsconeag Lakes Holdings. This area lies between the Namskanta Unit and Baxter State Park. Within these holdings are areas untouched by logging. White pine trees that are over twelve feet in diameter tower above moss covered ground. Huge boulders left standing alone by the last retreating glacier are covered in lichens, moss and ferns. Along with the land in TNC's ownership they also hold conservation easements on land stretching from Route 11 west of Millinocket north to Baxter State Park and farther north still along the west side of the park.

Community readiness to support experiential tourism

During assessment work in October 2004, FERMATA's assessor found the Millinocket area to be going through a time of change. There is conflict in the community about the best way to move forward in developing business. Many of the people in the town would like to see the return of the paper and wood industries. Other people in town are trying to make Millinocket a tourist destination with plans to develop a resort and guided activities. Currently tourists just pass through Millinocket on their way to Baxter State Park or other Northern Maine destinations. There is great opportunity to make Millinocket a tourist destination, but without community support it will not be possible.

The Greater Greenville area is an established tourist destination. There is infrastructure in place that caters to tourism and more specifically nature tourism. An advantage to Greenville is that a

visitor can enjoy the comforts and amenities that the village provides, then in a short drive be out in the wilds of Maine. One could even walk from their hotel room and follow a trail to remote mountain ponds.

Western Mountains Region

Twenty-five sites were evaluated in the Western Mountains region of Maine. The sites covered an area from Big Falls in the Northwest, Eustis Ridge Picnic Area in the Northeast, Narrow Gauge Trail in Carrabassett in the East, Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Rail Road in the Southeast and Coos Canyon in the Southwest. All of the sites were ranked according to their ASAP scores. The highest score possible is a 115. The highest score in the Western Mountains region was 89 and the lowest was 61. See Appendix.

The Rangeley Lakes Region has been a destination of travelers since Native Americans discovered the richness of the woods and waters. Fishing is what put the Rangeley Lakes Region on the map for the outside world. Fly-fishing is very popular in the region with healthy populations of landlocked salmon and lake trout (Togue) in the lakes and brook trout in the streams. The first Registered Maine Guide was from Rangeley. Cornelia Thurza Crosby, aka "Fly Rod" became the first registered guide after the state Legislature passed a bill in 1897 requiring all hunting guides to register with the state.

The Rangeley Lakes Region is still a tourist destination and there are several efforts to improve the area. The Rangeley Lakes National Scenic Byway is in place with plans to improve visitor services in the area such as scenic pull-offs and visitor information centers. The Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving open space, scenic beauty, critical wildlife habitat and the cultural heritage of the region. Since the Trusts founding in 1991 over 10,000 acres of land have been preserved. Most of the areas are open to recreation, education and scientific study.

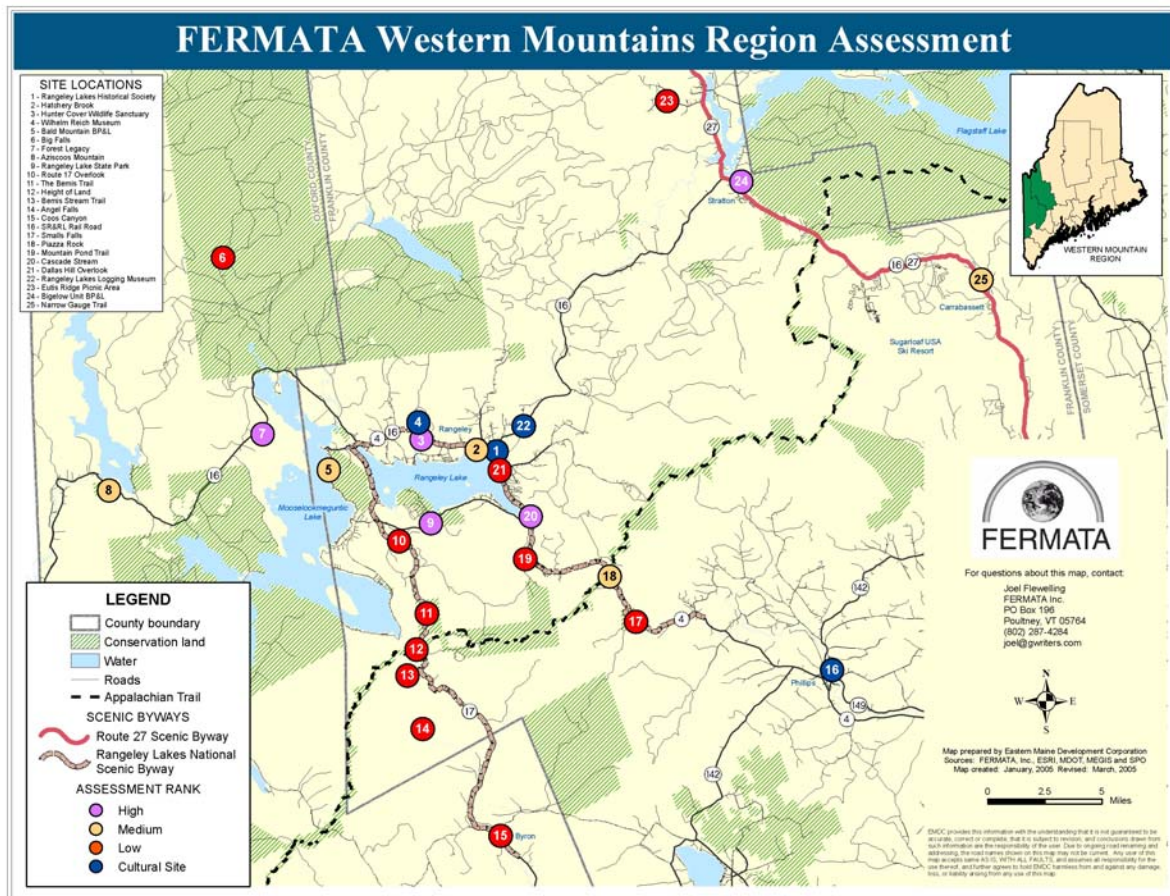
Visitors to the Rangeley Lakes Region will have many choices of activities. The difficult task will be deciding what activity to do.

One activity that is a well-kept secret with the locals and does not have a designated site is fish watching. In the fall, adult salmon from Rangeley Lake move into tributaries or the outlet to spawn. There are a few places around the lake that people can go and see hundreds of these sometimes very large fish from bridges or dams. Before promoting this activity, one would have to consider the risks involved such as danger to the people standing on a narrow bridge and danger to the resource such as disturbing the fish and prevent them from spawning.

The following table lists all of the sites that were evaluated by FERMATA. People who attended community meetings held in September and other nominations afterwards recommended the sites that were evaluated. The table also includes if they were recommended for inclusion in a tourism guide and the level of infrastructure improvements needed.

Map Number	Site Name	Summary of FERMATA Recommendations
1	Rangeley Lakes Historical Society	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform.
2	Hatchery Brook	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
3	Hunter Cove Wildlife Sanctuary	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
4	Wilhelm Reich Museum	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
5	Bald Mountain BP&L	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
6	Big Falls	Not Recommended
7	Forest Legacy	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
8	Aziscoos Mountain	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
9	Rangeley Lake State Park	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
10	Route 17 Overlook	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
11	The Bemis Trail	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.
12	Height of Land	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
13	Bemis Stream Trail	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.
14	Angel Falls	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.
15	Coos Canyon	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
16	SR&RL Rail Road	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
17	Smalls Falls	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
18	Piazza Rock	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
19	Mountain Pond Trail	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. However, needs major improvements.
20	Cascade Stream	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
21	Dallas Hill Overlook	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
22	Rangeley Lakes Logging Museum	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements

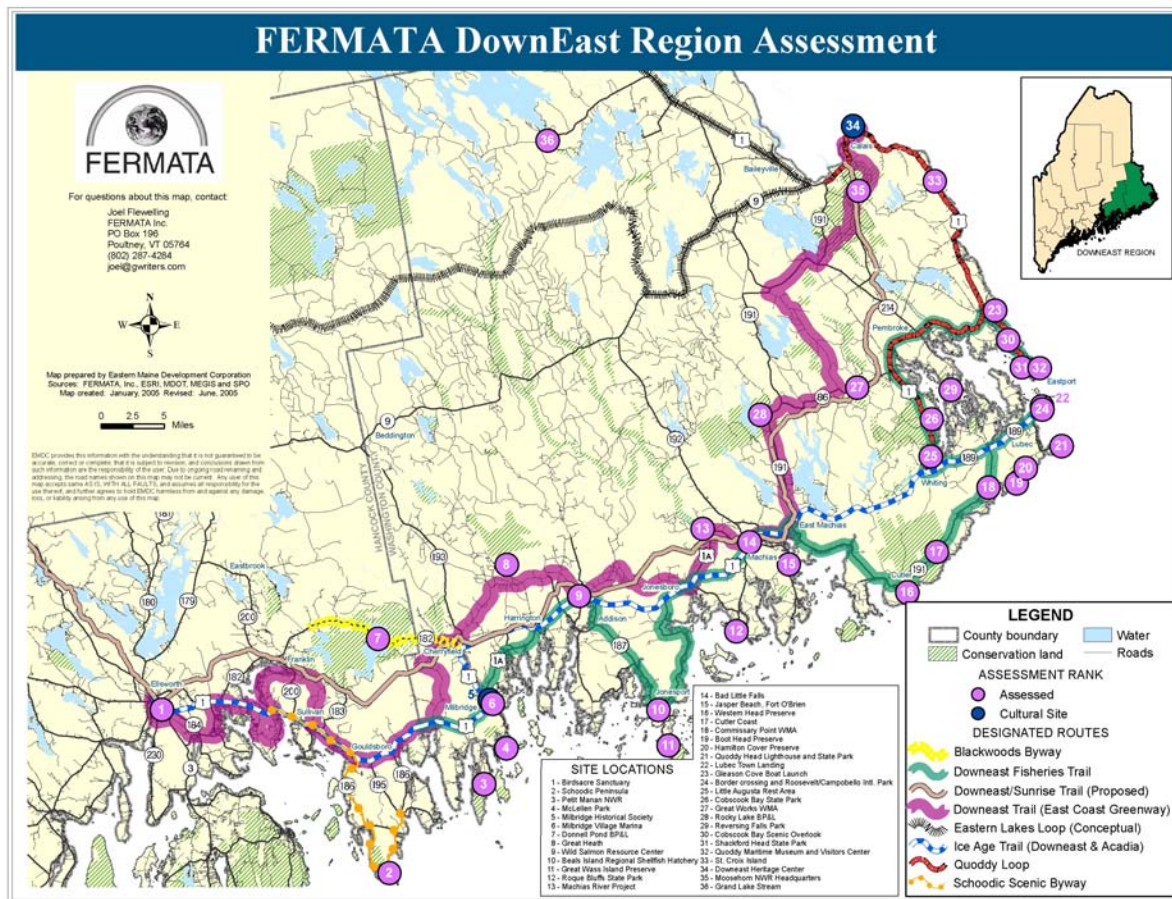
23	Eustis Ridge Picnic Area	Not Recommended
24	Bigelow Unit BP&L	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements
25	Narrow Gauge Trail	Recommended for inclusion in marketing platform. Needs minor improvements



Downeast Region

When traveling throughout the Downeast region of Maine visitors encounter many designated routes and travel itineraries. A visitor can be confused with the many designations that they see most of which have the word Downeast in the title. For example Route 1 in Machias is part of the Downeast & Acadia Route, the Downeast Fisheries Trail, the Maine Birding Trail, and the Ice Age Trail. Also in Machias are the proposed Downeast/Sunrise Trail, and the Downeast Trail (part of the East Coast Greenway).

There are many opportunities in the Downeast Region to promote nature tourism with existing sites and infrastructure. Below is a table that lists all of the sites that FERMATA visited and evaluated; and also sites that were recommended to us as possible nature tourism sites of interest. See Appendix for details on all sites assessed.



The designated route column in the table refers to one of the following trails or byways:

- A. Blackwoods Byway
- B. Downeast Trail
- C. Downeast Fisheries Trail
- D. Downeast/Sunrise Trail
- E. Ice Age Trail
- F. Maine Birding Trail
- G. Schoodic Scenic Byway
- H. Quoddy Loop
- I. Cobscook Trails

Number	Site Name	Designated Route
1	Birdsacre Sanctuary	F
2	Schoodic Peninsula	G
3	Petit Manan NWR	F
4	McLellen Park	
5	Millbridge Historical Society	C
6	Millbridge Village Marina	C
7	Donnell Pond BP&L	A
8	Great Heath	
9	Wild Salmon Resource Center	C
10	Beals Island Regional Shellfish Hatchery	C
11	Great Wass Island Preserve	F
12	Rogue Bluffs State Park	
13	Machias River Project	
14	Bad Little Falls	C
15	Jasper Beach, Fort O'Brien	
16	Western Head Preserve	F
17	Cutler Coast	C, F, I
18	Commissary Point WMA	F, I
19	Boot Head Preserve	F, I
20	Hamilton Cove Preserve	F
21	Quoddy Head Lighthouse and State Park	C, H, I
22	Lubec Town Landing	C, H, I
23	Gleason Cove Boat Launch	C, F
24	Border Crossing, Roosevelt/Campobello Intl. Park	H
25	Little Augusta Rest Area	
26	Coobscook Bay State Park	F, H, I
27	Great Works WMA	
28	Rocky Lake BP&L	
29	Reversing Falls Park	H, I
30	Cobscook Bay Scenic Overlook	C
31	Shackford Head State Park	C, F, H, I
32	Quoddy Maritime Museum	C
33	St. Croix Island	H
34	Downeast Heritage Center	
35	Moosehorn NWR	F, H, I
36	Grand Lake Stream	

Community readiness

Grand Lake Stream, although only 45 minutes from Calais, the community is situated within nearly 2 million unbroken acres of northern woodlands. Grand Lake Stream has been famous for fishing for decades, and there are a number of American plan lodges that function below capacity for non-fishing visitors. Although Grand Lake Stream has made few efforts to expand beyond fishing, many of the lodge owners express an interest in diversifying their offerings. Visitors to Grand Lake Stream can take a step back in time to experience the traditional Maine sporting camp. Modern conveniences are available such as hot showers, electricity and internet access, if you need to stay connected.

The Registered Maine Guides can lead their visitors on a number of adventures depending on the season. Grand Lake Stream is famous for its Landlocked Salmon fishing as well as Small-mouth Bass fishing. In the fall upland bird hunting is the main attraction with many excellent covers of Ruffed Grouse and Woodcock. In addition to the traditional sporting camp activities there are a number of other outdoor pursuits that one can enjoy. Bird watching is excellent in the area with migratory songbirds flooding in during the spring. Guides know the locations of area Bald Eagle and Loon nests for those that haven't had the chance to view them up close. Moose watching is popular throughout the summer. There are miles of hiking trails and logging roads to explore.

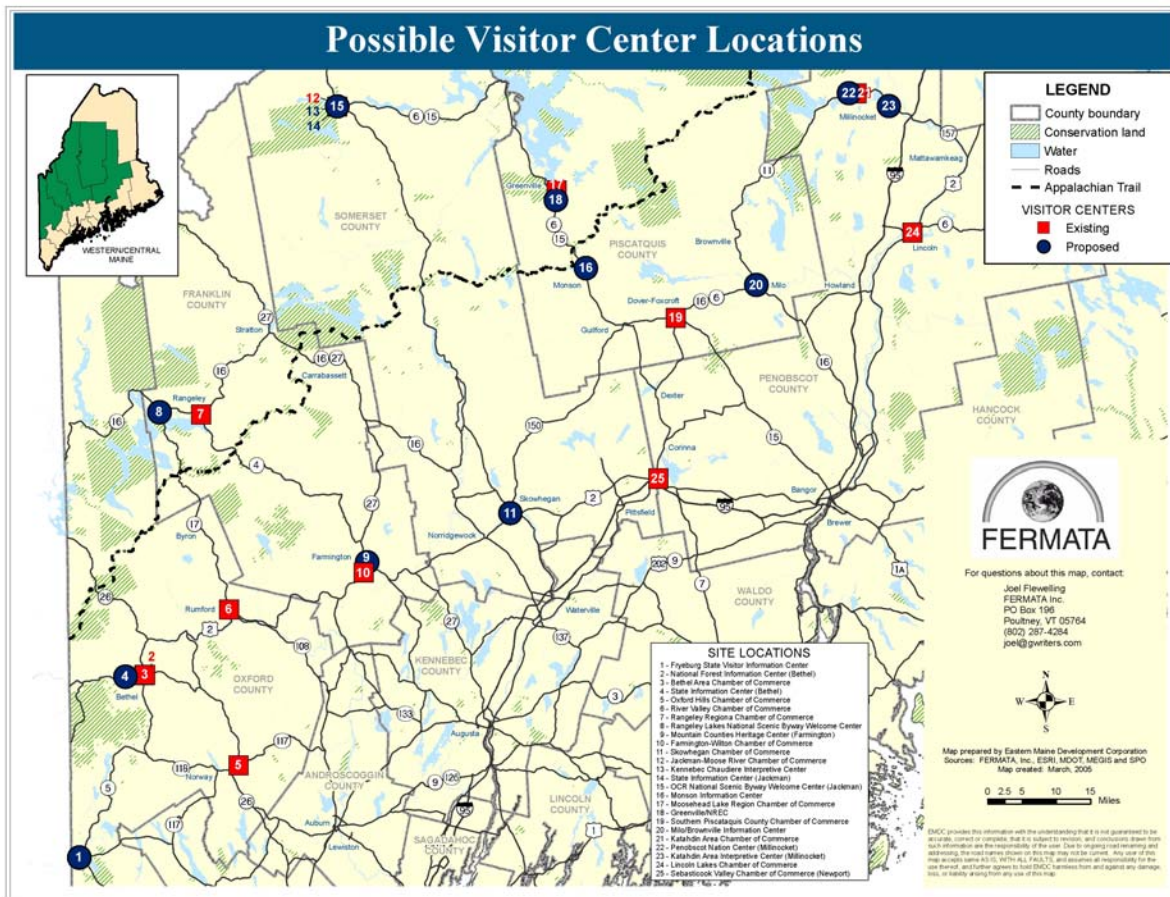
The other thing that makes Grand Lake Stream a special place is the work that the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership is doing. The Partnership has conserved 27,000 acres of forestland in the Downeast Lakes Region. Included in that acreage is a 3,560 acre Ecological Reserve where activities will be limited to preserve a part of the area for scientific study. The conserved land also includes 445 miles of shoreline on the areas lakes, ponds and streams.

The newly formed Grand Lake Stream Outdoor School will help attract more people to Grand Lake Stream and the school will help teach them outdoor skills that can be taught in this perfect setting.

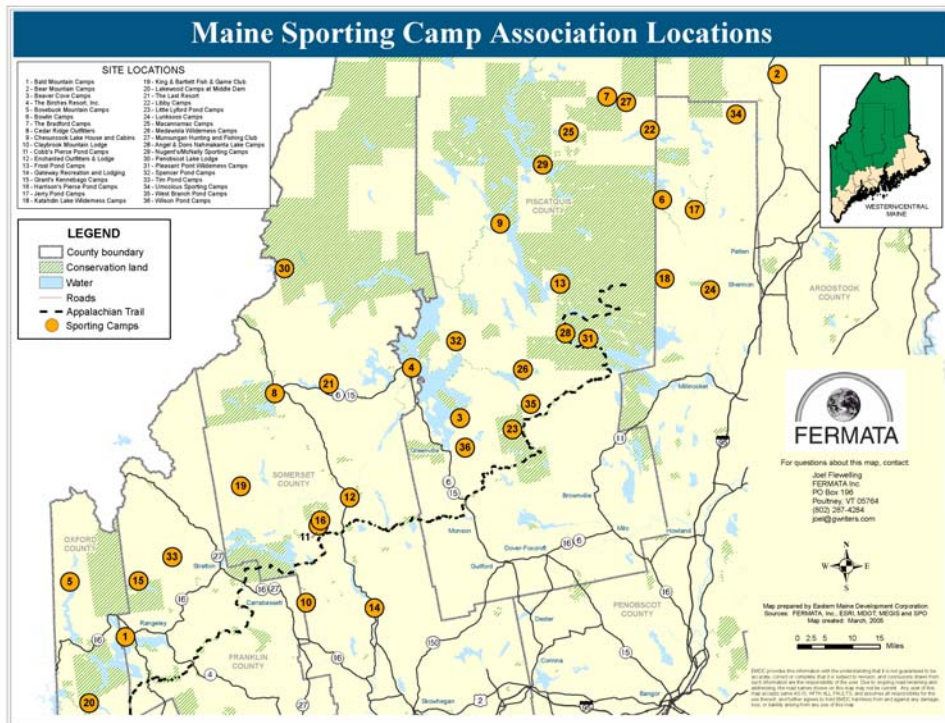
Grand Lake Stream needs to promote itself to their markets to convince people to drive that extra distance to get there. The niche that Grand Lake Stream has is the historic lodges and guide service in a remote setting. People go to Grand Lake Stream to get away from their busy hectic lives and enjoy the nature that surrounds them. Some of the lodges have now made it possible for business people to stay connected through Internet access, just in case they can't "unplug".

FINDINGS

- The nature resources that have been identified are substantial enough to serve as a foundation for a successful strategy. Culture and history should be used for enrichment to the natural resource based experiences. The nature-based and related cultural and historic offerings in the pilot regions do not function as any sort of thematic group and are largely just a disconnected collection of sites.
- The opportunity for developing highway-based thematic itineraries exists and is well supported by the state's transportation agency and others through the current identification of several state and national scenic byways and other route identifiers (Moosehead Trail, Katahdin Trail, etc.). Multi-modal corridors such as rail trails and water-based trails can also be connected. A good number of sites, offering a fair variety of visitor experience levels, exist along these routes. A number of different partners are interested in cooperating in these efforts and are willing to work toward connecting these sites and itineraries through unifying marketing and educational materials and interpretative signage.
- There are a number of visitor centers (existing and planned across the region). See following map and Appendix. Depending upon location and local leadership direction, these centers could function as gateways and portals to the regions' visitor experiences. Presently there is no network between the centers, but if such a framework were established, it would enable the centers to function as a seamless system for visitor information and education delivery. Good local support exists in the two western regions for this concept and planning is underway; and there is an excellent, but under-utilized resource, being developed at the new Down East Heritage Center. Managers of existing and planned nature centers, cultural heritage centers, and welcome centers are interested and willing to work toward the design of a uniform system for visitor service delivery within each region and across the Maine Woods as a whole. This may take the form of near real time information sharing between the various facilities.



- Appropriate lodging opportunities appear to be in ample supply through most of the three pilot areas. The information that FERMATA found on the availability of lodging in the three pilot regions came from the following sources. The Western Mountains Region lodging information was received from Mountain Counties Heritage and was from 2002. The Highlands Region lodging information was received from the Greater Bangor Convention & Visitors Bureau and was updated in 2005. The Downeast Region lodging information was received from a student in the Food and Hospitality program at Washington County Community College.
- See Appendix. Not all lodging will meet the quality requirements of many experiential tourists. There is also a need for strengthening marketing and promotion efforts of members of the Maine Sporting Camps Association and others to reach into the experiential tourism market. See map showing distribution of Sporting Camps throughout the region.



- Unique in the eastern US is the cache of the Maine Guides. The marketing potential of this highly recognizable brand is tremendous and Guides help to meet the very real need for visitors to the Maine Woods for customized guided trips led by knowledge local experts. Not only do guides serve to enhance visitor experiences, but they also enable resource managers and land owners to control access and convey important conservation stewardship messages through the Guides. Local economies are strengthened through employment opportunities related to guiding, however guides need technical assistance and training on messaging, marketing and outreach, and small business management.
- There is considerable recreation use taking place on private industrial timber lands. Implementation of Maine Nature Tourism Initiative pilot project recommendations could increase demands for recreation access to these lands by additional visitors by raising their awareness of the many opportunities. At this point, it appears that these landowners are generally willing to develop some infrastructure to support these increased demands and to manage use so that forestry practices can continue simultaneously. A system for fair compensation to the landowners needs to be developed along with a way of reaching visitors with messages regarding sustainable forest management's benefits.
- Authentic locally manufactured products and foods exist but are often poorly branded and marketed; and in many parts of the study regions are hard to find. This could be addressed through renewed efforts of existing producer organizations and relevant state agencies that currently exist and are interested in increasing promotions.

INTERPRETIVE THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

This Thematic Framework identifies a cluster of engaging, coherent and cohesive interpretive messages to serve as a guiding star in the development of public programs for the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative. By placing visitor experiences within a heritage context, this framework draws on the inter-related resources of nature, history and culture. In this way, recreational activities for both residents and visitors are located in a context that is simultaneously stimulating, meaningful and illuminating.

The framework consists of an Overarching Theme and three Sub-Themes. In time, core storylines will be developed and added to the framework. An Overarching Theme, by its very nature, is broad and inclusive. It is suggestive and multi-faceted. It has diverse implications. Sub-Themes, although still broad, are, at the same time, concrete and focused. While they work on more than one level, Sub-Themes are not as abstract or subtle as an Overarching Theme. Storylines are even more detailed, precise and particular. They combine a series of similar and related stories, events and incidents.

This Thematic Framework draws on the ongoing work of the Maine Mountain Heritage Network as a model. Steeped in local resources, traditions and stories, the Network has developed a series of thematic statements that are, with some modification and refinement, applicable statewide. While the framework delineated in this document has its own distinctive terms and themes, it very much builds on the previous work of the Heritage Network.

Goals

Clearly articulated interpretive goals are essential to the planning process. Such goals are especially important in helping to formulate interpretive themes or core messages. In the end these same goals also shape and impact the public programs that visitors encounter while touring the state.

Based on a review of key documents, meetings and interviews, the proposed interpretive goals for the Maine Nature Tourism Experience are:

- Develop meaningful themes and engaging public programs that highlight the interplay of nature, history and culture statewide.
- Identify themes and public programs that join the past, present and future, and, therefore, are relevant to the lives of contemporary visitors.
- Develop interpretive approaches that center around immersive experiences. Whether indoors or outdoors, immersive experiences are key to memorable and effective interpretation.
- Formulate themes, messages and programs that are authentic and indigenous to the state, while simultaneously addressing the interests and concerns of a larger American and worldwide audience.
- Generate a sense of community pride and encourage involvement while fostering an identity that is both genuine and immediately recognizable.

Overarching Theme: Living On The Edge

Bordering on Canada and the Atlantic Ocean, dotted with communities that are immediately adjacent to immense tracts of forests or the rugged seacoast, subject to extreme variations in weather and unrelenting winters, in more ways than one Maine and its residents live on the edge. These conditions make for sturdy character, inventive practices and a rich heritage. At the same time, these very same conditions have long made Maine attractive and exciting to a wide array of visitors. The challenge of engaging life without the easy comforts and amenities of modern civilization has for many years proven to be a magnet for people in search of adventure and immediate experience.

Ecologically, “an edge” has additional meanings. It is a place pulsating with life. Where meadow and woods meet, where land touches water, where one climatic zone intersects with another—all of which can be found in Maine--wildlife is diverse, abundant and active. Similarly, in cultural life there is parallel to this natural phenomenon. Where two cultures intersect—as in Maine where French-Canadian and Anglo-American cultures overlap—unexpected and unusual phenomena appear.

Today, as in past generations, the diverse ways in which life on the edge can be explored and experienced in Maine offers a gamut of meanings and attractions. Living on the Edge is an abiding characteristic of the state in light of its rich nature, history and culture.

Sub-Theme #1: Innovative By Nature

With a vast and rugged terrain of mountains, forests, seacoast, rivers and large lakes, Maine has virtually forced its inhabitants to become innovative, inventive and clever. Those who cannot grapple with the challenging natural conditions will not endure or survive. This state is not for the faint of heart. Furthermore, because nature is dynamic and constantly changing, solutions that work at one time are not easily applicable in another. Changes in nature demand flexible—rather than static--responses.

To make a living under these circumstances, residents of Maine have made use of the state’s natural resources, often in remarkable ways. Agriculturally, residents have marketed dairy products, apples, potatoes and maple syrup. Rivers have been harnessed for lumbering, papermaking, textile production, shoemaking and hydroelectric power. The forests have been logged, clear-cut and now finally managed. Granite and slate deposits mined. Rivers and ocean fished. Ice exported. A shipbuilding industry has bolstered the nation’s commerce and defense. Craftspeople have fashioned custom furniture, wreaths and specialty goods. For well over a century the nature based tourism industry has been a steadily growing part of the Maine economy and experience.

In Maine, even town life is to a degree shaped by nature. Because of location and access to resources some towns have become predominantly agricultural, others manufacturing centers, still others oriented to the lumber industry, while others have served as transportation hubs.

Sub-Theme #2: State Of Connectedness

Although population in Maine is generally sparse and natural barriers immense, over the generations, residents have gone to great lengths to surmount obstacles and make contact with one another. In many ways, Native Americans—forebears of the Penobscot, the Passamaquoddy, the Maliseet and the Micmac who still reside in the state--led the way in this regard. They not only developed trail systems for land travel and birch bark canoes for water transportation, but they were at the forefront in envisioning the entire natural world as a dynamic, interdependent and interacting entity.

In a more technological era, during the late nineteenth century residents of Maine constructed a far-reaching trolley system that connected most major towns and made it possible to travel from the Kennebec Valley to Kittery by trolley. Today the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, the Carrabassett River Trail, the Nashua River Rail Trail and the famed Appalachian Mountain Trail (which terminates at Mount Katahdin) carry on an old tradition and are only a few of the water, bike and walking trails that join one part of the state to another.

Maine's towns and cities are yet another way in which the state's inhabitants have developed a myriad of ways to maintain contact and develop interdependent networks under challenging natural circumstances.

Sub-Theme #3: Maine In The World

Naturally, culturally and historically, Maine has always been a part of a larger world network. Wildlife knows no national, state or county borders, as the flocks of birds migrating to Maine testify each year. Similarly, generations of Passamaquoddy, who lived here well before Europeans settled in the area, freely passed between areas now called New Brunswick and Maine.

Over the centuries, French Canadians, English, Scotch Irish, Swedes, Finns and Italians among others have immigrated to Maine to make it home. In turn, Maine industrialists and entrepreneurs shipped textiles, ice, potatoes, fish, and shoes to distant ports long before the term "global economy" was conceived. Today, tourists from around the world vacation in Maine to experience firsthand the state's remote forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. Similarly, each year hundreds of hikers leave Georgia intent on hiking the entire Appalachian Trail, with its final 281 miles in the state. In short, although on first impression Maine appears isolated and apart, in fact it is—and has long been—a vital component of a larger world wide system.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The following are FERMATA's recommendations for how the nature, history, and culture-based products and related interpretive programming can be developed and utilized to move key markets to the pilot regions and their assets; and to communicate messages that project partners seek to advance. In addition to product development, there is also a need for human resource development. FERMATA recommends technical assistance for site managers, service providers, and others on key interpretive messages and how to serve the needs of nature tourists; and also new state level staffing and task force creation to support the implementation of the initiative.

"Basically, what we need to do is develop and follow wise policies that protect and enhance the natural qualities that have always drawn people to this state. We should work at continuing to be as most visitors basically see us: a safe, family-friendly destination with great outdoor activities (plus a lot of other delights that may or may not show up in guidebooks or surveys). Sure, we want to woo more tourists, but we need to be smart about the kind of visitors we set out deliberately to attract. We want to be loved for what we are, but we must also continue to be what we are loved for" - Jim Brunelle, commentary *Portland Press Herald*

ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION

Action 1: Establish a Governor's Task Force for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative.

The purpose of the Governor's Task Force for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative would be to:

- help promote the growth of nature tourism and associated enterprises in the state of Maine;
- guide implementation and assure the coordinated and accelerated implementation of the priority recommendations for developing nature tourism in the state of Maine in general and in the three pilot regions;
- encourage development of additional private sector services, products, and lodging;
- guide efforts to cross market to traditional user and naturalist markets so that both will have ample opportunity to utilize resources for their preferred activities.

The Governor would name Task Force members and would include cabinet level representatives of the participating state agencies, members of the nature-based tourism industry including members of the Maine Tourism Commission's Natural Resources Committee and a representative of U Maine's Center for Tourism Research and Outreach (CenTRO), and two-three representatives from each of the three pilot regions. Consideration should be given to appointing at least one member of the Traveler Information Advisory Committee (TIAC) to this Task Force. This is a legislatively created committee and they have legislative jurisdiction over traveler related services of many types.(23 MRSA § 1901-1925).

Administrative support to the Governor's Task Force would be furnished by DECD and the Office of Tourism using current staff, a new dedicated staff person with a focus on the MNTI (see following action), and contracted services.

Timeframe: Task Force members to be named and first meeting schedule in October 2005.

It is expected that the Task Force would have monthly meetings and use an email listserv for information sharing between meetings.

Action 2: Create two new dedicated staff positions in DECD Office of Tourism to Support regional tourism development efforts with a focus on the MNTI.

One of these two people would focus on the Downeast pilot region. The other person would assist the other two pilot regions and work with current DECD and Office of Tourism staff and their contractors to support the new Governor's Task Force. Presently the Maine Natural Resource-based Industries initiative has a dedicated staff person in the State Planning Office; and that staff presence is one of the largest factors in the success of that initiative.

In addition to supporting the pilot regions' locally-led implementation efforts with technical assistance, it is recommended that these staff people would also be responsible for working in partnership with the regions on fund development efforts to support the long-term implementation of the MNTI on the ground.

It is expected that the new staff person in the Downeast region would help to develop capacity and leadership in local organizations across Washington and Hancock Counties; and build cooperation among numerous groups now working independently. The FERMATA study area was limited to the Washington County portion of the Downeast region. However, it is FERMATA's recommendation that this region be expanded to include both Washington County and Hancock County, allowing tourism assets such as Acadia National Park in Hancock County to help drive traffic to the rest of the region; and also to improve collaborative opportunities for regional tourism development efforts. The new staff person would assist the Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism organization in their efforts to represent and coordinate all Downeast communities' and service providers' tourism activities. This action is consistent with Goal 4 of the Down East Sustainable Tourism Initiative Year 2010 (DESTINY 2010) of the Down East RC&D Council (Nov. 2004).

Ideally, each of the three regions would have at least an addition ½ time staff person based in the region (perhaps at regional economic development agency offices) to supplement the work of volunteers in the regions who are currently leading and accomplishing implementation actions. It is recommended that one of the first topics undertaken by the new Governor's Task Force is to recommend the most effective way of creating and funding these regional positions; and also to establish how these positions would work in concert with the state-level positions and the local implementation groups.

Timeframe: Staff people would be recruited and hired by December 31, 2005. Task Force would develop recommendations for establishing regional support positions by April 2006.

ADDITIONAL INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

Action 3: Complete resource inventory and assessments in the rest of the state

There is a need to complete assessments and documentation of natural, and related historical and cultural, resources in the other regions of the state that were not included in the initial pilot areas work. It is expected that the best method for completing this work will be identified by the Task Force. Work could involve contracting with a planning and assessment firm to complete the assessment phase or to provide assessment training to volunteer assessors or assessors from state agencies or non-profit organizations' current staff.

MaineDOT has a GIS database of historic and cultural resources associated with transportation projects that have been undertaken. MHPC has numerous files that also inventory and assess additional resources currently not in the DOT database.

Timeframe: Hold for action until implementation of high priority action items is underway in the pilot regions.

ITINERARIES

Action 4: Finalize the itinerary and publish an itinerary guide for the Maine Highlands Region

The itinerary would connect recommended priority sites in the Katahdin Moosehead area as identified in the FERMATA assessment report. See map. Portions of the current (or proposed extended) DOT-designated Moosehead Trail and Katahdin Trail highway corridors make up the highway routes that would link the priority sites of this itinerary.

Members of the Piscataquis Tourism Task Force (PTTF) and others should continue their work of obtaining written agreements that are signed by all site managers or landowners demonstrating their permission for the inclusion of their site in the itinerary and guidebook. It is important that private landowners understand the potential impacts and benefits of designating their site as a destination in the itinerary. PTTF and others need to confirm driving directions and site descriptions as presented by FERMATA assessors. In addition, DOC representatives and others should be involved in assuring that those attractions and public or conserved lands identified in the report *Procedures for Evaluating the Potential Regional Economic Impacts of Conservation Lands in the 100-Mile Wilderness Region* (Anderson, Boyle, Bell, and Holden; Aug. 2005) are included in the itinerary as appropriate.

Some of the sites recommended for inclusion in the itinerary could benefit from infrastructure improvement and interpretation. See following Actions. In some cases, sites with excellent resources were not included in the itinerary recommendations due to the extent of infrastructure improvement necessary to either support visitation or to protect resources. An on-going task of the PTTF, the Millinocket Area Growth and Investment Council (MAGIC), the Piscataquis County EDC, and others in the region will be to work with landowners, state agency partners, and others to coordinate this development and eventual inclusion of additional sites in the itinerary.

The PTTF, the Culture Heritage and Eco-tourism (CHET) Committee of the PCEDC, the AMC, the Maine Highlands Corp., and others are presently assembling a map, site descriptions, and

user guidelines for use in this guide. The Office of Tourism and the state's ad agency should work with these partners to provide design assistance and matching funding for printing this publication.

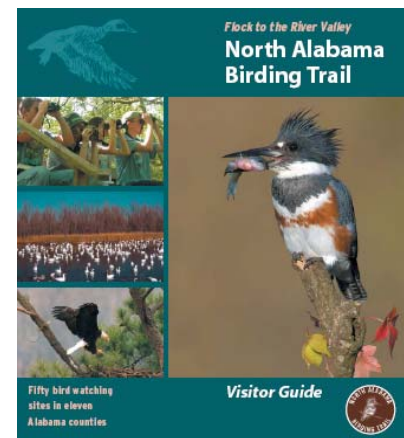
Southern Piscataquis County Regional Recreation Map and Guide Project Goals and Objectives

CHET, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and other partners in the Southern Piscataquis region will work cooperatively to develop and produce a regional recreation and stewardship Map and Guide that will:

- strengthen the appeal of the local region as a recreational destination with a rich cultural and natural history,
- engage residents and visitors alike in active and healthy lifestyles within natural settings, and
- reach out to recreational users to increase their appreciation of the resources, promote safety and ethical behavior, and instill a stewardship ethic.

The style of the guide for this itinerary is expected to become the template for other itinerary guidebooks to be developed in the other pilot regions in the state as part of implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative. FERMATA recommends that a booklet style rather than a large format map would be the most effective type of publication. See sample of the North Alabama Birding Trail visitors guide.

Distribution of the publication will be both in-region at participating sites and visitor centers; and upon request at all state visitor centers and through the Office of Tourism website and trade show presence.



Timeframe: Site managers' or landowners' permissions by fall 2005. Guide design and publication May 2006.

Action 5: Complete feasibility studies or Corridor Management Plans for possible new scenic byways in the Moosehead Katahdin area

DOT was contacted by PCEDC regarding the possibility of preparing a feasibility study or corridor management plan for a proposed new scenic byway between Greenville, Rockwood, and Jackman (now currently part of the Moosehead Trail DOT-designated highway corridor).

In addition DOT, proposes to study the feasibility of the creation of a scenic byway between Medway and Sherman (along what DOT now calls the Medway Trail).

Local government officials and economic development leaders in Brownville and Dover-Foxcroft recognize the current value of the DOT-designated highway corridor, The Katahdin Trail, in their region; and are also interested in seeing a DOT-led study of scenic byway potential along at least portions of that Trail corridor (in particular that area that would showcase the heritage resources of the Katahdin Iron Works site).

FERMATA recommends that DOT proceed with these studies and preparation of plans as appropriate in partnership with regional planning organizations and local community involvement. Scenic Byway designation would help to increase visitor awareness of the region's resources, reinforce the value of the itineraries as routes that connect key resources, and help to generate additional revenues for infrastructure enhancements and interpretation.

Timeframe: Study areas defined, local advisory committees named, consultants or others who would complete the studies/plans selected, and studies/plans begun – June 2006.
Recommendations finalized and studies/plans completed – June 2007.

Action 6: Finalize the itinerary and publish an itinerary guide for the Western Maine Mountains region

The Maine Mountains Heritage Network and scenic byways organizations in the Western Maine Mountains region have completed a significant amount of preliminary work for itinerary development in the region. In addition, FERMATA's assessment report recommended priority sites for inclusion in this itinerary. See map.

Members of the Network and others should continue their work of obtaining written agreements that are signed by all site managers or landowners demonstrating their permission for the inclusion of their site in the itinerary and guidebook. It is important that private landowners understand the potential impacts and benefits of designating their site as a destination in the itinerary.

Some of the sites recommended for inclusion in the itinerary could benefit from infrastructure improvement and interpretation. See following Actions. In some cases, sites with excellent resources were not included in the itinerary recommendations due to the extent of infrastructure improvement necessary to either support visitation or to protect resources. An on-going task of the Network, the byways organizations, and others in the region will be to work with landowners, state agency partners, and others to coordinate this development and eventual inclusion of additional sites in the itinerary.

"In June, 2005, the Maine Mountain Heritage Network and the National Trust for Historic Preservation sponsored a *Share Your Heritage Workshop* that brought together teams from nine local areas across the mountain region for the purpose of creating new heritage tourism "products," in this case themed itineraries. Teams from Norway/South Paris, Bethel, Rangeley, Farmington, Skowhegan, Jackman, Greenville, Dover Foxcroft, and Millinocket identified local sites and activities associated with themes ranging from "creativity and invention" to "the history of paper making" to "the healing effects of the mountain landscape." Teams then used these thematically linked sites and activities to design three day visitor experiences. Since the workshop, the Share Your Heritage itineraries have been used in a variety of ways, from designing an event to setting up a fam tour for travel writers to building a local network linking farmers and visitor service providers. Over the coming months, local teams will further develop their itineraries, building working relationships among partners, testing designed experiences, and putting simple mechanisms in place to track results. MMHN is now applying to the Maine Office of Tourism for funding to support local promotion of the Share Your Heritage itineraries in the spring of 2006." From Bruce Hazard, Maine Mountain Heritage Network

Fishing is a popular activity in this region and in streams and rivers adjoining the region. Presently single resource guides to fishing opportunities exist. Content from these publications should be included as sidebar information in the itinerary guidebook for this region.

The guidebook for the itinerary in this region should follow the style developed for the Moosehead Katahdin area described above. Local groups in the western Maine mountains should coordinate design with the Office of Tourism and take advantage of the availability of matching funds through the Office of Tourism.

Timeframe: Site managers' or landowners' permissions by winter 2005. Guide design and publication fall 2006.

Action 7: Create the Downeast Wildlife and Heritage Trail.

A new thematic itinerary should be developed in the Downeast area that utilizes the many resources available on public lands and private sites (with landowners' permissions). See FERMATA resource assessments and map.

Note: FERMATA's assessments were limited to Washington County. However, FERMATA recommends that this itinerary be extended through local input and utilizing local inventories to include the entire Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism region (Washington and Hancock Counties).

Called Maine's Big Sur by National Geographic's *Guide to Scenic Highways and Byways* (second edition), US 1 from Ellsworth to Calais is "truly a road less traveled. Most tourists never get past Bar Harbor and miss the crashing surf at Acadia National Park's Schoodic Point, the tiny fishing villages that dot the coast, and the small cities a stone's throw from the Canadian border."

Partners such as those who came together to develop the Down East Sustainable Tourism Initiative Year 2010 (DESTINY 2010) under the leadership of the Down East RC&D Council and state and federal agency representatives should be involved in this site identification process. Through the on-going involvement at the local level of partners such as the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, City of Calais, and DOC, additional sites can be added to the itinerary similar to and including the newly acquired Devil's Head Conservation Area, the state's highest coastal headland of the St. Croix International Waterway.

This new Downeast Wildlife and Heritage Trail will serve to link other existing and planned thematic itineraries and trail systems (including the local sections of the new statewide birding trail, the existing state scenic byway, the proposed DOT Calais Branch Rail Trail, those trails described in the Cobscook Trails booklet published by the Quoddy Regional Land Trust, and the planned DOC Ice Age Trail) to unify and connect visitors' experiences.

The guidebook will function to clearly show linkages among the numerous itineraries that exist in the Downeast Region presently; and thereby address concerns of visitor confusion related to the presence of multiple routes. In addition, the trail and guidebook will provide a direct connection with the current and recommended future exhibits and storylines at the Downeast

Heritage Center (DHC). See Action below describing recommendations for other interpretative programming support at DHC.

The guidebook will consistently describe (using the same style of writing, level of detail for site description and driving directions, use of imagery, etc.) the sites that make up the new itinerary/trail. The guidebook for the itinerary in this region should follow the style developed for the Moosehead Katahdin area described above. Local groups should coordinate design with the Office of Tourism.

During several public meetings in the Downeast region, FERMATA planners learned that many lodging facilities and guides questioned the need for another thematic itinerary and the utility of a guidebook. Their sense is that the best way for visitors to explore the region is based at a camp and under the guidance of a local guide or at the direction of the camp owner. FERMATA concurs that first person interpretation is always a good approach to assuring quality visitor experiences. However, not all visitors are interested in guided trips or staying in camps. The recommended guidebook is not intended to hurt existing entrepreneurial businesses; and it is expected that as a result of the book, new visitors will discover the area and may at some time return and take advantage of professional guiding services or stay in a camp.

Timeframe: Identify local partners to guide project and assist with matching funds – ASAP. Site managers' or landowners' permissions by winter 2005. Guide design and publication fall 2006.

Action 8: Develop supplementary itinerary interpretation and guides.

This recommendation involves a number of actions that will supplement the initial guidebook production for the three pilot regions. Some of these actions include:

- Placing all of the above pilot region itinerary guidebooks and interpretative signs (described in following Actions) in a searchable on-line database with clickable image map on the Maine Tourism website. This will allow for updates by site managers or others.
- Development and production of audio cassettes or CDs for each route by the Office of Tourism or others for use by visitors once in the regions.
- As a first priority, FERMATA recommends utilizing much of the work of the existing Maine Birding Trail initiative as the initial subject-specific guide.

In addition to serving as a bird finding tool, the Maine Birding Trail publication would function to educate visitors as to responsible bird watching ethics and the importance of respecting the rights of private landowners. Not all content in the current on-line trail guide is "asserted to be accurate, official, or sanctioned by the individual landowners or stewardship authorities". As such, the Task Force and others will need to gather landowner and site manager permissions and assess sites (not previously assessed for the three pilot regions' general itineraries) for suitability for supporting visitation prior to publishing the Birding Trail guide.

The Office of Tourism should support the efforts of statewide non-profit groups and others to design and publish hardcopy and on-line versions of plant identification guides, bird checklists, and other materials to be identified by Task Force and site managers. DOC's Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Geological Survey and Bureau of Parks and Lands have important information to contribute to this effort.

An example of a current effort that the Office of Tourism or others could help to support is a new initiative of the Kennebec-Chaudière Heritage Corridor group in the western Maine mountains region to develop a CD for use by whitewater guides with their clients during the off-river portion of their experience. The content of this CD could be used as-is or with few modifications by general visitors to the Corridor.

Timeframe: Birding Trail guide and Kennebec-Chaudière Heritage CD – summer 2006. Other publications as partner interest and funding availability permit.

HIGHWAY SIGNAGE TO SUPPORT ITINERARIES

Action 9: Highway directional signs

DOT working with the other Governor's Task Force members should design, fabricate, and install uniform highway directional signs for the various pilot region itineraries. The Office of Tourism should play an advising role on design elements to assure consistency with publications as should the DOT's committee on tourism and signage. Other local groups such as Moosehead Trail Corridor Committee, PTTF, and scenic byway committees also need to be consulted. It is important the new signage system be developed in such a way that it complements existing signage but at the same time provides visually consistent and recognizable symbols to guide visitors through the regions from site to site.

Local organizations and site managers need to be involved in finalizing the sign plans; and in helping to furnish matching funds or in-kind support for installation and sign maintenance. Nearly all organization representatives encountered by FERMATA planners during community meetings identified this as the type of project in which they would be willing and able to contribute resources and leadership.

For example, the Piscataquis Soil and Water Conservation District has earmarked funds to support efforts for coordinated signage for natural resource tourism in Piscataquis County. In this County as well, there is interest on the part of county officials in placing welcome signs at the major County borders. Officials are also talking about simple informational kiosks and have a couple of new roads that the County may be getting assistance to re-gravel and re-open to facilitate public traffic to important resource-based tourism attractors such as Moxie Falls.

The highway directional signage recently designed and installed in the western part of the state for the Androscoggin Canoe Trail is a good example of the type of signage recommended for the three pilot regions' itinerary waypoints.

Sign design needs to be consistent with efforts underway for various state and national scenic byway signage. All other sign designs should be developed to be consistent with existing special route designation signage previously developed and installed by DOT.



DOT has worked with representatives from the various tourism regions to outline designs and regional symbols. The Downeast/Acadia system was the prototype. DOT could secure funding to address these types of signage. A sign policy initiated by DOT in collaboration with DECD/OT and Maine Tourism Association and TIAC is about 90% complete. Maine Turnpike Authority is not explicitly mentioned but may be affected. The Task Force should assist with completing this policy. The policy specifically was intended to create a branding image for sign design; and to limit the signage to publicly owned and managed destinations as an issue of fiscal limitations.

The Task Force needs to address several questions - Who pays for replacements due to aging or damage? What are the long term maintenance implications of this recommendation?

Timeframe: Signs designed and installed by summer 2007

Action 10: Design, fabricate, and install uniform wayfinding signs

At least some of the sites along the pilot regions' itineraries do not presently have any site identification (wayfinding) signage. DOT and site managers need to work together to design and install signs to be consistent with imagery developed for highway directional signs. Wayfinding signage is important to reassure visitors following an itinerary that they have arrived at sites shown in their guidebooks and maps. MaineDOT currently has a project which funds this type of signage for the Schoodic Peninsula Scenic Byway.

Timeframe: Signs designed and installed by summer 2007

INTERPRETATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Action 11: Write, design, fabricate, and install uniform interpretative signs for sites along itineraries that do not presently have any interpretative signage. Site specific stories should tie to overall thematic framework as recommended by FERMATA for Maine Nature Tourism initiative. Mounting to be on low profile pedestals at most sites and on three-sided kiosks to be fabricated and installed at gateway sites such as visitor centers.

The Office of Tourism and DOT are logical partners for obtaining funding and providing overall project direction including fabrication and installation assistance. DOC and IF&W staff have excellent skills in planning, writing, and design for interpretative signs; and should be involved in all aspects of planning and design. Members in the Western Maine Mountains Heritage Network have invested considerable time and effort in discussing interpretative themes and deployment actions. FERMATA's recommended thematic framework (see below) draws upon this good work. Representatives from the Network interpretative planning effort should also be involved in the overall MNTI interpretative sign planning and design.

Bordering on Canada and the Atlantic Ocean, dotted with communities that are immediately adjacent to immense tracts of forests or the rugged seacoast, subject to extreme variations in weather and unrelenting winters, in more ways than one Maine and its residents live on the edge. These conditions make for sturdy character, inventive practices and a rich heritage. At the same time, these very same conditions have long made Maine attractive and exciting to a wide array of visitors. The challenge of engaging life without the easy comforts and amenities of modern civilization has for many years proven to be a magnet for people in search of adventure and immediate experience. Ecologically, "an edge" has additional meanings. It is a place pulsating with life. Where meadow and woods meet, where land touches water, where one climatic zone intersects with another—all of which can be found in Maine--wildlife is diverse, abundant and active. Similarly, in cultural life there is parallel to this natural phenomenon. Where two cultures intersect—as in Maine where French-Canadian and Anglo-American cultures overlap—unexpected and unusual phenomena appear. Today, as in past generations, the diverse ways in which life on the edge can be explored and experienced in Maine offers a gamut of meanings and attractions. Living on the Edge is an abiding characteristic of the state in light of its rich nature, history and culture. *FERMATA, Interpretative Plan for the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative*

Design and materials for the signs need to be consistent with signage already in-place and designed by DOC; or planned and designed by scenic byways organizations in the Western Maine Mountains Region. See proposed sample prepared by FERMATA designers to illustrate use of thematic framework and to tie with design elements utilized in the Kennebec-Chaudière Heritage Corridor interpretative signage.



The interpretative team may find it useful to develop a style guide for interpretation for distribution and use by all interpretative plan implementation partners (public and private. See example developed for Lake Champlain in VT, NY, and Quebec (http://www.lcbp.org/wayside/Manual/Lo_Res_Manual.pdf)

The Task Force or interpretative planning team (made up of agency representatives and others) needs to plan for and develop interpretation for specific sites along the itineraries such as state parks and for trails that will be incorporated into itineraries such as Ice Age Trail or Calais Branch Rail Trail. This site specific interpretation needs to match the style developed for waypoints; and utilize themes and stories that are consistent with the thematic framework for the entire project.

Timeframe: planning for signage for one itinerary completed by October 2006 and signage designed and installed by June 2007; other planning completed and signs installed by June 2008.

Action 12: Support efforts to create a network of interpreted visitor centers

Presently the numerous centers in the region and elsewhere serving the region (along the Interstate and other major highways) are not linked thematically. These facilities should function as a seamless system for visitor information and education delivery. It may be necessary to develop a state-funded incentives program for getting centers to cooperate. The need for this action should be explored further by the Task Force and center managers or others.

Good local support exists in the two western regions for this concept and planning is underway. The Heritage Network is doing good work in promoting cooperation and communication among center projects across the mountain area. That group is discussing financing approaches, new information/communication technologies, and a proposed traveling exhibit designed to put forward regional themes and to demonstrate cooperation among the centers.

There is an excellent, but under-utilized resource and somewhat disjointed interpretative effort, at the new Downeast Heritage Center (DEHC). The DEHC could benefit from focused effort to develop effective interpretative programming and program support. It is expected that this center would function as the portal site for the new Downeast Wildlife and Heritage Trail itinerary. Therefore, there is a need to plan for this use and to redesign exhibits as appropriate to reflect key subthemes and storylines conveyed by the sites along the trail. The DEHC should be used to add meaning to visitors' experiences and encourage them to explore the region.

Specific actions to be undertaken include:

- study need for incentives program to stimulate cooperative messaging;
- staff training on the overall *Maine Woods Experience* thematic framework messages and pilot region itineraries;
- creation and installation of consistent exhibitry to match site interpretation signage to encourage visitors to explore the Maine Woods via one or more of the itineraries;
- development and population of database system for near real time information sharing;
- detailed interpretative planning and redevelopment at the DEHC;
- consider the existing and proposed Maine Turnpike and Interstate system visitor information centers' roles.

The Office of Tourism should take the lead on these efforts with support from Task Force or agency interpretative staff. Others to involve include the Maine Tourism Association, the Western Maine Mountains Heritage Network, scenic byways' staff, and DEHC leadership and other visitor center managers/operators.

Timeframe: General: training on messaging begun in 2006 and completed by May 31, 2007; exhibit design plan by Dec. 31, 2006 and fabrication and installation complete by June 2008; database design by Dec. 2006 and fully operational by June 2007. DEHC: Plan for exhibit modifications and additions – spring 2006; exhibit fabrication and installation – Dec. 2006

Action 13: Build one or more new multi-facet visitor and interpretative centers to serve as a gateway to *The Maine Woods Experience*.

A new center should be developed in partnership with local non-profits, members of the state's forest products industry, and state agencies. Presently there are many proposals for developing new interpretative centers in all of the pilot regions including several that would be intended to function as the gateway to the entire Maine Woods Experience. Because no one center currently functions in this manner, it would be desirable from the visitor experience standpoint to have one center with this dedicated focus.

There is a need to establish a method by which rational decisions about where this investment should best be placed. The Task Force (and in particular DECD and DOT) needs to take the lead on creating on addressing the location decision question as well as consider what is best approach to linkage, what are minimum requirements for top quality visitor experience, how the center will be maintained and operated (most likely using a variety of local and state resources).

Of those centers under consideration, several include:

- Natural Resources Education Center (NREC) near Greenville where a private non-profit group is working with Piscataquis County EDC and the Town of Greenville. The mission of NREC is to “educate and inform people about the Moosehead region’s natural resources of the past, present, and future. NREC is the primary source that people rely on to understand the culture, natural history, and uses of the North Woods.” The NREC steering committee is currently developing an operations plan and seeking construction funding for an environmental education center on land south of Greenville. It is recommended that if this facility were developed as the new gateway to the Maine Woods, it would need to serve a broader function than its current leadership envisions; and have more inclusive governance. Involve IF&W and DOC as possible building tenants; and to provide information to visitors on public lands facilities and recreational opportunities.
- The Old Canada Road National Scenic Byway is developing a plan to construct and operate an interpretative center in the Western Maine Mountains area. The exact location is still being discussed by the committee and others.
- Katahdin Discovery Center. “Working with the Maine Community Foundation, the Millinocket Area Growth and Investment Council (MAGIC) set up a community fund called the Katahdin Fund (KF). The KF partners envision a destination learning and

visitor center within a few miles of I-95. The Katahdin Discovery Center would welcome the broadest cross-section of tourists, recreationists, school groups, and other with exhibition and screening areas highlighting the area's rich natural and cultural history and attractions. Exhibits would serve to educate and inspire, as well as direct visitors to the many attractions that the greater Katahdin region offers. At the center of Maine's North Woods and as the logical gateway to an area of stunning natural beauty, the center would provide information and assistance to those traveling in any direction."

- Visitor gateway center near Ellsworth. It is expected that this interpretative center would function to move visitors Downeast; and to DEW&HT and DHC portal site. This would allow visitors the opportunity to find the authentic experiences they are seeking but may not find at Acadia NP. Consider relocating proposed DOT/NPS visitor center now proposed for Trenton to serve this function

Timeframe: Study best location and make site recommendation – spring 2006. Prepare concept plans for building design and function – June 2006. Construction – spring 2007

Action 14: Design and construct highway-based enhancements along itinerary routes

FERMATA's assessment of itinerary sites made a number of recommendations for infrastructure development needs. This work includes road paving, road widening for biking, new pull-outs at observation areas, parking area development or expansion, observation area viewing platforms and trail construction, canoe and boating access sites development, and other activities.

DOT should take the lead in making these enhancements either as stand alone projects accomplished through enhancements funding or in the capital work plan or in conjunction with adjacent planned highway work. An example of how this could work is the Hurricane Deck project in the Highlands region. DOC and IF&W should provide input to DOT along with local community representatives.

Timeframe: June 2008

Action 15: Calais Branch Rail Trail

In July, Governor Baldacci announced that he charged DOT with putting together a management and maintenance plan for removing the tracks on the Calais Branch Railroad between Ellsworth and Ayers Junction (87 miles) and allowing construction of an interim multi-use trail. DOT has assembled a committee of stakeholders to work with the agency to develop the plan by the end of November. It will be presented to the Transportation Committee of the Maine Legislature in early 2006.

If well-supported, DOT will move ahead with track removal and trail construction as it secures funding. It will also prioritize sections for construction. Necessary developments will include trailhead parking, trail signage, interpretative signs, trail map publication, and other actions.

Timeframe: Rail trail management plan – Nov. 2005; Track removal and rail trail construction – as funds are available; Rail trail development – June 2007

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Action 16: Devise and begin implementation of an integrated, multi-agency/multi-partner integrated marketing communications campaign to raise awareness of *The Maine Woods Experience*.

The Task Force, led by the Office of Tourism should utilize:

- messages recommended by FERMATA's thematic framework.
- Acadia National Park, Appalachian Trail terminus (in cooperation with the NPS and the Appalachian Trail Conference on appropriate messaging), and Baxter State Park (in cooperation with the Park's managers) as unique attractors
- consider using H.D. Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, connections and messages.
- Native American product and experience opportunities including work currently underway by Penobscot Nation on experiential tourism product development and multi-tribe basket center in Old Town.

"Following the stress and strain which have prevailed, more than ever before does the call of the Maine woods find a responsive note among the men and women who have had a share in the hardships of war and reconstruction. The vacation program offered by the Maine woods, widely and properly known as 'the nations playground', presents a variety which means that practically throughout the year are attractions of unfailing appeal. The world over, the vast expanse of forest wonderland is famous for its fishing and hunting, for the many canoe trips through waterways of surpassing charm, for mountain climbing opportunities, and for the general delights of scenery and picturesque surroundings which make it the supreme vacation region" - *In the Maine Woods* (1921) by George Houghton (publisher Bangor and Aroostook Railroad).

Focus campaign in priority markets as identified in FERMATA's assessment. Work will include:

- Write, design, and print a new dedicated publication for The Maine Woods Experience highlighting itineraries, visitor centers, and key messages
- Distribute publication at visitor centers, trade shows, and in response to inquiries;
- targeted advertising using messages and images developed for publication
- update existing state of Maine and other tourism promotion groups' standard publications and websites regarding The Maine Woods Experience using key messages and images developed for publications
- create of one or more literary and art pieces,
- participate in adventure travel and outdoor recreation shows;

Timeframe: Phased over three years. Year one – complete new targeted publication and distribute

Action 17: Devise and begin implementation of public relations efforts.

The Task Force led by the Office of Tourism should focus on travel writers and editors with special interest media, but also look at mass media in recommended markets. Develop a photo library for use by media and regional marketing organizations. Messages and stories need to differentiate Maine and Maine's nature-based offerings from those of other northeastern states that are competing directly with the state of the same visitors.

Develop or strengthen partnerships with:

- well-known, Maine-based corporations that are emblematic of the authenticity associated with the Nature Tourism Initiative such as Toms of Maine and LL Bean.
- international cooperative ventures such as Gulf of Maine initiatives with Gulf of Maine Council, National Geographic, and others; and Discover New England organization;

Timeframe: This effort could begin immediately with the announcement of the opportunities and continue as new events, itineraries, attractors, etc. are developed and ready for visitors.

Action 18: Develop new events or support existing events

Events and festivals are an excellent way of introducing uninitiated experiential tourists to the natural and cultural heritage of a region. Local organizations, supported by the Task Force and others, should develop new events and expand promotional efforts for existing events. Excellent resources on “How to” plan events and festivals including nature tourism event planners and a booklet published by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, *Providing Positive Viewing Experiences*.

The Down East Spring Birding Festival, sponsored by the Cobscook Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, the Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge, and other organizations takes place over the four-day Memorial Day Weekend in late May. In 2004, 77 birders from 9 U.S. States and New Brunswick attended. They stayed in at least 16 local accommodations, found 151 birds, and contributed \$33,187 to the area in estimated direct economic impact. These figures increased the second year. In May 2005, 84 birders attended from 15 U.S. States and New Brunswick. They stayed in at least 18 accommodations, found 176 birds, and contributed \$39,816 to the area. Planning already has begun for the 2006 birding festival, which will take place May 26-29, 2006.

Timeframe: On-going, beginning in spring and fall 2006.

Action 19: Coordinate efforts and share information among all who are involved in Maine Nature Tourism initiative and Maine’s Natural Resource-based Industries effort.

Recommended tactics include:

- Convene marketing roundtable to coordinate efforts and share information
- Include state agencies such as IF&W and DOC, tribal governments, members of Sporting Camps Assoc. (and other lodging providers), members of the Maine Guide Assoc. (and other guides), other non-profits (such as AMC, ATC, and Audubon), North Maine Woods and other interested landowners, and the marketing entities for the three pilot regions (and other regional marketing organizations from the rest of the state interested in co-branding/promoting under *The Maine Woods Experience*).
- Develop and implement one or more multi-agency demonstration projects to reach into key experiential tourism markets through advertising, public relations, and a visible presence at appropriate outdoors and travel shows.

Priority 4: Maine's image - inseparably linked with its natural resources and its sense of place – is a potent tool for marketing. Maine's clean, green, worry-free appeal is universal. At the same time, small producers and businesses could benefit from a coordinated marketing effort. Increased collaboration may be able to boost Maine's presence in the marketplace. The Steering Committee's goal is to (1) explore market issues including branding, marketing, marketing structure, and cooperation between marketing organizations; and (2) develop approaches to strengthen links among marketing organizations, enhance distribution systems, and create a common and compelling message. Lead agency: DECD, with Dept. of Ag., DOC, IF&W, Marine Resources, and DOT. From *Governor's Steering Committee on Natural Resources-based Industries Top Five Priorities*.

There is a proposal to the agencies presently for creating an Outdoor Maine program (based on the Outdoor Alabama model) that could be modified to reflect FERMATA's recommendations on markets and messages; and could be developed as the first effort to address the needs identified through the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative and Maine Natural Resource-based Industries efforts.

Timeframe: Year one – convene roundtable and hold quarterly meetings; and complete planning for demonstration project. Year two – begin demonstration project

VISITOR SUPPORT SERVICES ASSISTANCE

Action 20: Provide technical assistance and incentives to owners of new or existing authentic Maine lodging properties.

The funds and assistance should be used to plan for new markets and obtain funding to make improvements or new developments as needed to support the new Maine nature tourist market. This recommendation is not for enhancement of traditional facilities for traditional markets, but rather a new action for a new, upscale market. DECD should take the lead in implementing this recommendation.

It is important to note FERMATA's finding that for all of its natural assets, the three pilot regions generally lack the type of lodging facilities that are necessary to take full advantage of the experiential tourism market. This is a high end market, with many of these tourists seeking lodging that includes upscale amenities. Additionally, they want that lodging experience to have the ring of authenticity to it: construction with local materials, serving local food, selling local products, etc.

In the western part of the state and between the Western Mountains and Highlands pilot regions, there appears to be suitable lodging that has been developed in connection with the ski resorts in those areas. There is a need to develop strategic marketing relationships between these facilities and nature-based attractors in the adjacent regions.

Timeframe: Year one – develop assistance program components and obtain funding. Year two – begin funding and offering technical assistance

Action 21: Support efforts of members of Maine Guide Association and others by designing and offering training and technical assistance.

Actions to implement this recommendation include:

- Development and promotion of customized guided trips in the Maine Woods in order to enhance visitor experiences;
- Expanded partnerships with Maine Sporting Camps and other lodging properties to develop packages;
- Need to develop and offer training to guides on itinerary development, messaging, and marketing to experiential tourists;
- Expand existing guide training and certification to support new directions.

DECD should take the lead in this effort with IF&W, Maine Outdoors, and others cooperating as appropriate. Maine Outdoors has developed a course that will combine many business basics with a specific knowledge developed over time of what does and does not work to make one of these special businesses successful.

DOC staff have been instrumental in working with many organizations to develop a *Leave No Trace* ethic and practice. DOC staff would be willing and able to provide training on this topic as well as some of the geologic, natural plant community, historic and other natural and cultural features as part of a systematic portrayal of Maine's assets.

"Registered Maine Guides are well respected throughout the country for their knowledge of Maine's woods and waters. This high level of outdoor knowledge does not necessarily make someone qualified to run a small business, develop customers or handle bookkeeping. Most small business courses are aimed at business sectors other than outdoor recreation services."
Don Kleiner, Maine Outdoors

Timeframe: Begin winter 2005 and continue to support

Action 22: Develop and provide hospitality training to front-line lodging staff and other service-related businesses' personnel.

This training is needed to insure consistent communication of messages and values of the Maine Woods to visitors. Use some of the training developed for visitor center personnel (see Action 12). Also start by refining and expanding current training offerings of Maine Tourism and Hospitality Institute (MTHI). See Appendix. The MTHI was formed to educate, train and provide technical assistance to tourism and hospitality businesses and their employees. This type of technical assistance and education is currently offered on a sporadic basis in specific geographic locations, thus limited in its availability to the private sector businesses and organizations. Funding for the MTHI, a non-profit organization is needed for start-up and then it is expected to be a self supporting initiative through tuition of participants and grant funds.

Trainees could either come to a central location for classes by the MTHI or others, or classes could be brought into individual businesses and employees trained on-site. This latter model was piloted earlier in 2005 successfully at a property in the Maine Highlands region.

“Built to meet the needs of industry professionals in all positions, the [MTHI] training series integrates classroom instruction and hands-on training by industry experts to provide a comprehensive experience. Customer service skills, local and regional destination information, and line-level skills training are all included in the series” - MTHI brochure.

Other adult education providers such as University of Maine Extension and Penquis Higher Ed Center in Dover Foxcroft could also play an important role in providing hospitality training to front-line lodging staff and other service-related businesses’ personnel.

Timeframe: First classes offered by December 31, 2005 and continue to support

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Action 23: Branding and marketing natural resource-based products and services.

Authentic locally manufactured products and foods are often poorly branded (with regard to Maine as a place of origin) and marketed; and in many parts of the three pilot regions are hard to find.

This can be addressed through renewed efforts of existing producer organizations and relevant state agencies. DECD; Maine Natural Resource-based Industries Steering Committee members, and others should continue to address this issue. Consideration should be given to adding a craft producer to the Governor’s Task Force for Implementing the Maine Nature Tourism Initiative.

The authenticity and high quality of the products, and how that information is conveyed in the retail setting, are the keys to consumer enthusiasm and strong sales. Retail environments will be successful only if they offer products that meet consumer expectations for design, quality, and functionality. Authentic, utilitarian products that are exotic, functional and beautifully made with top-quality materials are the most marketable. V. Lederman, *The International Ecotourism Society Newsletter*, 2001

An example of successful branding and marketing of authentic local products is the work of the Maine Highlands Guild. The Guild “is a non-profit organization located in rural Maine whose mission is to educate the public about the culture, artistic traditions, and opportunities in The Maine Highlands. The Guild works with local artisans to help them sell and promote their locally made products.” The Guild should expand services to the entire Maine Woods region or be used as a model of a successful marketing and promotion network that could be established in the other regions.

Marketing messages should be tied to the place-based and attitudes-based themes of the proposed interpretative framework.

Timeframe: On-going

ADDITIONAL STUDIES RECOMMENDED

Maine Woods National Heritage Area Feasibility Study

The Task Force and others should evaluate the feasibility of positioning *The Maine Woods* as a heritage landscape (“Special places created by human interaction with the natural environment”). In November of 2004, the Maine Mountain Heritage Network put forward “a regional development plan that places experiential tourism development at the center of a suite of proposed heritage-based development strategies. The goal of the Network and its plan is to bring new revenues into the Maine’s mountain region (Oxford, Franklin, Somerset, and Piscataquis Counties) through creative use of the region’s heritage assets. Early in its planning process, the Network adopted a “heritage area” model as a platform for organizing its proposed marketing and development activities.”

In July, 2005, with pilot projects underway in each of four program areas (Knowledge Power, Woods and Waters, Village Works, and Mountain Made), the Network’s coordinating team decided to request an opinion from the National Park Service as to whether the region could qualify for national designation as a heritage area. Should the NPS preliminary assessment be positive, the Network would then determine whether it would be advisable to proceed with a full feasibility study, a prerequisite for national designation. National designation would bring significant new technical assistance and funding to the Maine mountain region from the federal level to support locally created and managed heritage development projects.

A nationally designated heritage area is different from a national park in several important ways. National designation of a heritage area does not in and of itself result in federal ownership of property or any increase in regulatory control by government at any level. A “national heritage area” is a place recognized by the United States Congress for its unique contribution to the American experience. In a national heritage area, natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make national heritage areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in the areas. Continued use of the national heritage areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance.

According to a 2004 University of Michigan study, over 100,000 people visited Louisiana’s Cane River National Heritage Area in 2003. Average spending was \$171/party/day with total visitor spending that year of \$8.7 million. The direct employment effect of visitor spending was 207 jobs.

The National Park Service has outlined four critical steps that need to be taken prior to congressional designation of a national heritage area. These steps are:

1. Completion of a suitability/feasibility study;
2. Public involvement in the suitability/feasibility study;
3. Demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation; and
4. Commitment to the proposal from key constituents, which may include governments, industry, and private, non-profit organizations, in addition to area residents.

If the national heritage area approach is adopted, FERMATA recommends a governance structure be established similar to that of the Cane River National Heritage Area in Louisiana:

“The Cane River National Heritage Area Commission is the management entity that guides heritage area activities. The nineteen-member commission represents the wide variety of institutions, organizations, and interests that intersect in the national heritage area. As a government agency, the commission has authority to hire people, administer grant programs, develop loan programs, and set priorities, but it has no zoning or land-use powers and no power of eminent domain. The commission members were appointed by the secretary of the interior and are therefore, representatives of the secretary and the federal government. All of the commissioners volunteer their time. Officially, their appointments last three years, after which they can be reappointed or replaced.”

“Like National Parks, the National Heritage Areas give the public opportunities to experience natural, cultural, and historic resources and scenic landscapes of outstanding national significance. The fundamental difference between the two is that National Parks are set aside as places to visit - not to live - while National Heritage Areas are populated with local residents whose cultural, historic, and economic traditions are a critical part of the mix. In essence, the program provides opportunities to preserve a region’s natural, historic, and cultural resources by harnessing them to promote rural economic development. Designation as a National Heritage Area gives a region access to the positive marketing benefits of the National Park “brand.” The market for nature-based and heritage-based tourism is growing steadily, and the National Park identity can give a region a tremendous competitive advantage. The official definition states that a National Heritage Area is “a place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.” There are now 23 federally designated Heritage Areas and Heritage Corridors in the U.S., with many more under consideration.” From *The Proposed Cumberland Plateau National Heritage Corridor: The Case for Federal Designation and Step One: The Feasibility/Suitability Study* by Edwin Gardner, Heritage Strategy Group

Compensation for private landowners for use of their lands for outdoor recreation

A preliminary study was undertaken by Leadership Maine recently and found that as important as compensation is the need of landowners for visitor education and recognition of importance of their managed forests to recreation and economic development.

Carrying capacity of resources and communities for increased visitation

Consider the limits of acceptable change both to the residents of an area and to the type of experiences sought by visitors related to the number of people at one time that they will encounter during a trip. This may vary by location, remoteness, experience type, and other factors. The University of Maine CentRO is presently in the process of designing this type of research and is assigning personnel.

Limits to Acceptable Change is quite simple in concept. We have resources, which include visitor experiences, to protect to some degree. Since every visitor has an impact, no matter how lightly tread, we need to decide in what condition we want to maintain the resource-experience. Thus we choose the desired conditions of the resource-experience, then the variables to measure them, and subsequently the maximum amount of alteration or change we are willing to accept (hence, "limits to acceptable change"). Finally we decide which mitigation tactics we will use if the conditions approach, reach, or exceed those limits. To do that requires very special attention to the communities' wants, needs, and desires, and to assure the product packs a satisfying experiential punch. Ultimately, of course, the number of visitors does matter. There's always a maximum, but that maximum depends on the kind of management being applied and on the limit of acceptable change. Since both always change, so does the number of people. Thus a region that cares about its visitors focuses on the resource-experiences, not just the number of people standing on the thin ice of dubious assumptions. They will fall through. Jon Kohl, *The International Interpreter*.

It is important that this study also include an assessment of emergency services providers' capabilities and capacity for growth; and the anticipated demands for additional services that will result from increased visitation.

Possibility and feasibility for certification of nature tourism operators

The Task Force should continue discussion on this topic; and evaluate several possible approaches put forward by researchers and others such as the Leave No Trace Program in the region and world-wide. If the need for further study is agreed upon by the Task Force, then researchers should be commissioned to study the feasibility and recommend methodology. One possible approach to certification could be through guide licensing as coordinated by IF&W.

"Ecotourism advocates are convinced that rigorously accredited, attractively labeled, and effectively marketed outdoor recreation has "win-win" potential. It helps sustain healthy ecosystems. It also increases demand and raises profitability for participating tour businesses and strengthens the economy of host communities." David Vail, Department of Economics, Bowdoin College

Identify land acquisition opportunities needed to support expanded nature tourism offerings

The Task Force, working with local groups in the three pilot regions, Land for Maine's Future, and others should identify the land acquisition opportunities and needs that would protect and enhance the quality of experiences including improving access to existing waypoints on the itineraries and also making the addition of other waypoints to the itineraries possible.

Public meetings and agency input have led FERMATA assessors to understand that there is ongoing development pressure challenging the qualities of many of the assets proposed for inclusion in the pilot regions' itineraries. The Task Force should consider the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Traditional Uses and Public Access to Lands in Maine (due fall 2005) to sustain and enhance the opportunities for public access to private lands for traditional recreation.

SELECTED LIST OF PLANS AND STUDIES THAT INFORMED THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

Nature-based and Cultural Heritage Tourism in Piscataquis County (C.J. Reilly and C.E. Morris, Nov. 2004)

The Moosehead Lake Region Orientation and Interpretative Center Strategy (Greenville Office of Economic Development, Aug. 1991)

Economic Opportunities of the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership Conservation Project (P. Borden and K.P. Anderson, Jan. 2005)

Action Plan 2001-2006, Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment – Goal 3 Encourage Sustainable Maritime Activities, Objective B. Develop and implement a nature based tourism strategy that sustains the environment and the well-being of local people.

Case Studies of Nature Based Tourism Opportunities in Maine 2001 (Prepared for a Symposium on Nature-based Tourism in Maine by M. Edwards, April 2002)

Appendix A

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY – APPLIED SITE ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL™

Need for a protocol

People generally are swept with a disarranged set of sensations when first confronted by nature. Sounds, smells, feel – sensations that are at once pleasant, at times perplexing, or even repulsive. Perhaps the aesthetics of a location (the South Rim of the Grand Canyon) sucks the breath from our chest. Perhaps the feeling of accomplishment colors the experience, such as when a birder finally identifies their first Connecticut Warbler skulking through the brush at Point Pelee. What about a bugling elk sounding through the Eastern Kentucky Appalachian Mountains? In each case, the experience is distinctive. And in each case, we react to the experience in an equally singular fashion. Travelers enter nature to expand upon their life experience, and to extend these singular moments beyond the immediate. We gather or collect experiences through the act of travel. As we gain a familiarity in nature, these once-jarring sensations become increasingly orderly and logical. As each facet of nature is distinct, so are nature travelers equally diverse and practiced. Therefore, when considering the value of any specific natural location as a nature tourism destination, we must first consider how each tourist might react to its discrete set of resources.

Using Applied Site Assessment Protocol™ criteria to identify and type nature tourism destinations

Fermata developed and patented the Applied Site Assessment Protocol™ (ASAP) to frame such an assessment. ASAP should not be confused with a biological assessment, since the protocol is interested in weighing sites relative to their tourism, rather than ecological, value. If resources determine visitation, then the better these resources are understood relative to their distinct recreational or appreciative value, the better we can plan for tourism development.

The ASAP™ protocol weighs both intrinsic and extrinsic values of a specific site, adjusting these values with a final series of modifiers. Sites are valued respective to the market (international, national, regional, or local) and relative to themselves.

Waypoints help lead visitors through the thematic itinerary that tells the story of that region, area, etc. The determination of a waypoint is based upon its possession of certain intrinsic and extrinsic values as well as modifiers. Sites that do not possess one or more of the key intrinsic and extrinsic values are not recommended as waypoints.

Intrinsic values

Intrinsic values are those innate to the resource. Intrinsic values originate within the resource itself, and are considered independent of outside influences. Intrinsic values include the following:

Landscape

Scale

Scale encompasses the scope and grandeur of a site. As urban sprawl encroaches on native habitats, pristine and preserved habitats are more precious. A site that is composed of 1,000 acres of pristine or preserved habitat is on a scale of grandeur that would score it higher than a much smaller site composed of similar habitat. Alternatively, impressive landscapes surrounded by otherwise barren habitats also score high. For example, a pocket park in an otherwise stark urban landscape would receive a high score.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Small (<1 acre) barren landscape	Small (<1 acre) landscape that is unproductive and common to other surrounding area landscapes	Large (>20 acres) or small (<1 acre) site that is in the process of rehabilitation back to its original grandeur	Small (<1 acre) of preserved or rehabilitated, native, fruitful landscape in urban setting	Large (>20 acres) of preserved, native, fruitful landscape especially in an urban area (Ex. Central Park)

Integrity

Integrity relates to the quality of the landscape. Sites that are pristine, continuous and undisturbed (above 3) receive a higher score than distressed landscapes that have been negatively altered by natural or human disruptions (below 3). Similarly, previously disturbed landscapes that have been successfully managed to rehabilitate the site and encourage native habitat restoration are equally quality sites (above 3). Examples of this abound in southeastern Pennsylvania where once destructive strip mines have been reclaimed, now serving as extensive grassland habitat and recently attracting nesting Short-eared Owls.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Heavily disturbed, distressed landscape that has continuous environmentally negative / detrimental human impacts (Ex: Site located on or near a functioning nuclear power plant, polluting industrial plant)	Disturbed and/or fragmented landscape that is a result of environmentally negative / detrimental human impacts.	Landscape that is moderately distressed as a result of normal natural and/or human wear and tear.	Rehabilitated landscape in early or mid-successional process of restoration. Supports at least early successional habitat and species.	Pristine, continuous and undisturbed landscape or Successfully rehabilitated landscape that is entirely (or nearly) restored (Ex: Pennsylvania's reclaimed acid mines)

Aesthetics

Aesthetics relates to the physical appeal of the landscape. A site that is not well-maintained such as a landscape cluttered with trash or large machinery detracts from the aesthetic appeal of the site and therefore would score lower (below 3) than a well groomed and well-managed managed landscape.

Contrary to this, an ideal aesthetically pleasing site would be a Grand Canyon of sorts where a beautiful landscape is decorated with scenic vistas, mountain peaks, flowing waterfalls or the like.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Visually unappealing landscape that is possibly neglected and/ or reflects negative human impact (ex. cluttered with trash, large machinery or the like)	Distressed landscape that is in the process of repair	No noticeable physical appeal either good or bad that distinguishes it from surrounding landscape	Visually pleasing, well-maintained landscape that is well-groomed and/or well-managed to attract the uninitiated tourist	Naturally (not manmade) beautiful, navigational landscapes decorated with scenic vistas, mountain peaks, flowing waterfalls or the like – the kind of landscape that inspires paintings (Ex. Vista of the Seven Sacred Pools along the road to Hana in Maui)

Resource

Diversity

Diversity relates to the depth and breadth of the resources such as the flora and fauna at a site. This includes the diversity of animal species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects as well as site vegetation such as plants, trees, grasses, bushes, and other flora. A site that holds a wide array of resources (i.e. various birds, mammals and insects) will score higher (above 3) than one that has limited resources (i.e. only a few bird and insect species). Alternatively, diversity can also relate to the variety within species. A site that only has a limited variety of plant and animal groups, but has high diversity within species (i.e. seven different types of shorebirds and/or more specifically, seven different plover species) will score higher (above 3) than one that has only a few genus and species (below 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No diversity among and between species regardless of the density of species	Little diversity among and between species and / or common species that are tolerant of human interruption and therefore are found virtually everywhere.	Average; without any outstanding diversity among or within species that distinguishes it from another site	High diversity either within species (Ex: seven different types of shorebirds) or among species such as not only shorebirds, but also waterfowl, wading birds, songbirds, raptors and game birds	High diversity within and among species (Ex: not only seven different species of shorebirds but also various species of waterfowl, wading, songbirds, etc.)

Specialty

Specialty of the resources relates to the uniqueness of the resource and whether a site is known or identified for this specialty. For example, in Louisiana, a site possessing regionally endemic Roseate

Spoonbills will score higher than a site that possesses merely the ubiquitous Feral Pigeon. Resources that are specific to that site, area or region are more specialized (above 3) than more common, ubiquitous resources (below 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Lack of special resources. Only common or ubiquitous species found elsewhere in different areas and regions of the country (Ex: Rock Doves)	Mostly common species mixed with very few less common resources (i.e. resources identified as those found along the entire Atlantic Coast).	Regionally endemic species that are prolific throughout the region	Unique resources endemic to that particular area which are found only in that area, region, or specific habitat (Ex: Northern Jacana found only along the coast of Texas, parts of Arizona and Mexico).	Unique resources endemic that are found only at that particular site or in a specific area either resident or migratory (Ex: XYZ that stops only at 123 site in its migration or a site that lies on one the few remaining tall grass prairie habitats).

Conspicuousness

Conspicuousness resources are those that are blatantly obvious and difficult to miss when at a site. This could be because of the prominence and density of a certain species (i.e. 10,000 Monarch Butterflies that travel through the backyard of a Texas hill country ranch every October) or the grandeur of the resource itself such as mega fauna (i.e. Elk in the Pennsylvania Wilds).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No density of species or No identifiable, blatant resource that would draw attention to the resource or site.	Limited number of inconspicuous species, making it difficult to find (Ex: 10 reported five-lined skinks in a 10,000 acre area)	Densities of inconspicuous species/resources	Prominent density of easily viewed (in your face) species or events seasonally throughout the year (Ex: Monarch Butterflies during end of life migration).	Prominent density of easily viewed species or events year round or The presence of conspicuous, (large or uniquely identifiable) species such as mega fauna or obviously identifiable species (Ex: Sturgeon watching in Oregon).

Appeal

The appeal of a site's resources is derived from the aesthetics of the site or the resources themselves. A site that is appealing to one or more of the five senses, especially to an uninitiated nature enthusiast, will score higher (above 3) than a site that is either lacking in visual stimulus or requires an experienced eye to spot (below 3). Appeal also applies to the site species. A site that maintains either year round or during migration, flocks of Sandhill Cranes, a more uncommon species, will be more appealing (above 3) than a site that only hosts a flock of common European Starlings (below 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Resources that offend (Ex: solid waste site) one of the five senses	Lack of natural resources that appeal to one of the five senses and fail to stimulate the nature experience (Ex: Urban park devoid of trees right next to smokestacks)	Appeals to one of the five senses.	Appeals to more than one of the five senses	Appeals to more than one of the five senses in a positive manner and would add to the nature watching experience and/or has at least one unique appealing species that would appeal to the uninitiated.

Scope

Scope relates to the number of resources/species at a site and their proportion to the world population. Sites with a limited number of species and density will score lower (below 3) than those that cover a broader range of species and number of resources relative to the world population (above 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No scope present - no apparent densities and no range of species.	Limited numbers of only prolific or common resources/ species (Ex: the occasional Cardinal)	Seasonal Densities of a limited range of common and uncommon resources.	Seasonal densities of uncommon species whose proportion is great compared to its world population (Ex: Sandhill Cranes migrating through Nebraska Sand Hills)	Prominent density of multiple uncommon species year round with a broad scope (Ex: A site with the largest resident population of XYZ in the country).

Dynamics

Dynamics includes the predictability of the resource, and whether it was seasonal or episodic. A site that is predictable that can guarantee visitors a sound viewing experience throughout the year will score higher (above 3) than a site that is random or episodic (below 3). The dynamics of a site's resources relate to the changing nature of a site such as daily, biannual, annual and seasonal differences including the prominence of various resources at different times of the year. This dynamic can also relate to naturally occurring events such as flooding, burning, high tides and foliage changes.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Unpredictable or episodic resources where a visit to the site could be hit or miss.	Dynamic resources or viewing opportunities that are constantly changing or Constant unpredictable resource conditions.	Resources that change seasonally and offer the potential for different experiences for the visitor.	Resources that change seasonally such as during migration but are predictable from season to season and/or year to year.	Constant predictable resources that do not change throughout the year and that a viewer would be guaranteed to see year round.

Significance

Uncommon, occasional and rare resources endemic to the site create a special quality that differentiates it from other surrounding sites. Additionally, endangered or threaten resources or the presence of regionally significant and/or representative resources can set a site apart from other area sites. For example, a site that possesses one of the few remaining places where an XYZ can be seen or a site that is one of the first successful reintroductions of the XYZ since 19XX will score higher due to its significance as either a natural phenomenon or because of successful management and conservation efforts.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Lack of significant or rare resources. Only “abundant” species found elsewhere in different areas and regions of the country	Presence of only common resources	Presence of fairly common species intermixed with common species	Presence of uncommon resources	Presence of rare, threatened, or endangered resources

Extrinsic values

Extrinsic values are external to a resource. Although originating outside of the resource, these values do influence the assessment of the resource, as a whole. Extrinsic values are:

Social

Local and/or regional support for a specific site can make the site assessment and trail implementation easier and more successful. Examples include volunteer naturalists, interpretive programs, etc.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No social component or Community opposition to the project and trail implementation or opposition to the site's inclusion on the trail	No support for the project and trail implementation; no support for the site's inclusion (Ex: Unable to engage participation by site owner, community or regional businesses)	Acceptance of the project and trail but no active support	Community acceptance and support of the project and trail implementation and acceptance and support for site's inclusion on the trail including participation by site owners, the community and regional businesses.	Not only support for the project, trail and site inclusion but active initiatives to implement trail including community development and implementation new programs to promote the project and/or trail. Active participation by volunteer naturalists and site owners/managers in site nomination, public meetings and to promote the project.

Cultural

Oftentimes, an area's culture is tightly linked to its natural resources and can significantly influence the amount of support and/or opposition to a site's inclusion on the trail. If the site and/or area has cultural aspects that would contribute to the understanding of nature (i.e. an annual decoy carving festival that takes place at a site where there is great waterfowl concentrations) and/or benefit from nature tourism promotion, then it will score higher (above 3) than a site whose culture detracts from the understanding of nature and/or is negatively impacted by nature tourism development (i.e. Nature site located on a sacred Indian burial ground).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No cultural component or Cultural aspects that are not consistent with a nature trail and have been detrimental to sustainable nature tourism development (Ex: Cock fighting)	Cultural aspects that would be negatively affected by the site's inclusion on the trail (Ex: Sacred Indian burial ground).	Cultural aspects that would add another dimension but are not necessarily nature related.	Cultural aspects that compliment the theme of the trail.	Cultural aspects that contribute to the understanding of nature and encourage education and nature tourism development and Will benefit from nature tourism development.

Historical

An area's history is often intrinsically related to its natural resources, detailing its past. A site that has a rich historical significance can add to the diversity of the trail. An example is the French and Indian Fort at Crown Point on Lake Champlain. This location is where battles were fought because it was narrow place in lake. Today, the area is the location where migrating warblers drop out of the sky while flying along the Lake.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No historical component	Historical aspects that would either negatively affect the trail or be negatively affected by the site's inclusion on the trail	Historical aspects that would add another dimension but are not necessarily nature related.	Historical significance that is connected and relates to the natural world	Direct relation to history and nature that is capitalized on and promoted at the nominated site (Ex: The Lewis and Clark trail in Montana that traces their natural exploration west across the United States)

Recreational

Recreational opportunities can supplement a visitors experience to a site and the region. Sites that have biking and hiking trails and offer other opportunities for other activities (i.e. canoe rentals at a state park surrounding a lake) while visiting the site as well as interpretive materials, signs and other amenities will facilitate a more accommodating, diverse and comfortable nature tourism experience (above 3) than a site that completely lacks any sort amenities or interpretation (below 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No recreational opportunities or implemented facilities or amenities to supplement the nature experience (Ex: No trails, no interpretive materials, no amenities) or Environmentally detrimental recreational opportunities	Limited recreational opportunities and no amenities, infrastructure or interpretive material or Unrelated recreational opportunities.	Recreational opportunities but no interpretive material or infrastructure to facilitate (i.e. a canoe launch but no rental)	One or more recreational opportunity that coincides with the site and its inclusion on the trail (trails, interpretive, amenities).	Exceptional recreational opportunities and amenities. Implemented interpretive trails, supporting recreational opportunities (canoe rentals, fishing, etc.), interpretive materials, visitor center, amenities such as restrooms, cabin rentals, etc.

Economic

A site that is economically self-sustaining or offers opportunities for economic development and will encourage nature tourism and benefit a site or community will score higher (above 3) than one that either has no sustainable economic opportunities and/ or will face increased costs as a result of inclusion.

Examples include a gift shop or admission charged – ways for community to benefit economically from inclusion on the trail.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No economic opportunities; costs of inclusion would be negative or an economic burden.	Economic opportunities that are initially negative and an economic burden, requiring additional fund raising or hiring but that would eventually be recovered after the initial investment.	Sites inclusion would not have an economic impact on the site.	Self-sustaining funding for nature tourism (Ex: Admission charge, film admission, program or field trip charge).	Site has opportunities to raise additional funds and provide additional programs, infrastructure, staff, promotion, etc.

Modifiers and constraints

The complete assessment is modified according to a set of constraints or *limiters*. For example, a destination may exhibit a high resource value that is limited by a regulatory constraint. A score of “1” will automatically preclude it from inclusion on the trail. A score of “2” may exhibit the same limitations. However, the site has qualifying factors that seek to mitigate those constraints and prevent it from being automatically eliminated. ASAP modifiers or constraints are:

Ecological

The ecological sensitivity of a site can prevent its recommendation for inclusion. If a site cannot tolerate visitors without it disrupting a delicate ecological balance at the site or being hazardous to the sustainability of the site resources, it will not be recommended for inclusion.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Site is too sensitive; inclusion would be hazardous to its sustainability	Site can handle visitors, but they must be limited in number or Site has strict environmental restrictions that limit the visitor's experience the site.	Site can environmentally sustain visitors to the area with some restrictions	Site is stable enough to environmentally sustain visitors to the site.	Site will benefit from inclusion environmentally (Ex: Inclusion will garner greater environmental awareness, and support for ecological programs)

Physical

Physical barriers that prevent or inhibit easy access to the site lessen its suitability for inclusion and therefore would score lower (below 3) than a site that facilitates access (above 3). An example of a physical barrier is the presence of a steep cliff that must be climbed in order to access the observation area.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	No access (Ex: Posted "no trespassing" signs)	Difficult access (Ex: climbing a steep cliff to get to an observation area or Locked gate that requires permission and a key prior to visiting the site).	Site has no preventative physical obstacles, but does not facilitate access (Ex: A wildlife management area with no parking, no walking trails, etc.)	Site has basic infrastructure needs that allow access such as pull-offs and parking.	Tier two infrastructure needs that go beyond basic access such as parking to improving the viewing experience such as paved trails, wheelchair accessibility, bridges, lookout towers, viewing platforms, etc.

Social

Social constraints are those relating to site owners and/or managers as well as the community. Even if a site scores high on both its intrinsic and extrinsic values, but doesn't have support for the site's inclusion, it will not be recommended.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Site owner/ manager does not want visitors or Community does not want visitors	Only partial community support for inclusion or Owner/manager didn't originally want to be included or support the trail, but has begun cooperating or Only support with strict regulations.	Site and community acceptance but not clear, active support or participatio n.	Community and site owner cooperation and support for the trail in general and inclusion of the site specifically.	Active support and promotion for the site's inclusion by the site owner/ manager and the community and active participation in working with and between site managers to promote the trail or encourage support.

Cultural

Cultural modifiers relate to the area's people and history that could either preclude it from inclusion or a culture that would correlate well with the nature trail and would not be negatively impacted by the trail. Rather, the inclusion of such sites would enrich the area's culture.

	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Negative cultural impacts (Ex: Infringing on sacred Native American burial sites)	While inclusion might be counterculture or have negative impacts, plans are being discussed and initiated to mitigate the negative impact.	No negative cultural impact	Site and trail are consistent with the area's culture.	Positive cultural impact as a result of the site's inclusion or synergy between culture and site. Inclusion would enrich the area's culture.

Health and safety

If there are health concerns such as the presence of venomous snakes without reasonable access to an anti-venom or safety concerns such as the lack of safe pull-offs or conditions that would cause a visit to a site to be difficult or dangerous, its recommendation would be modified accordingly.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Site access is dangerous (Ex: Located on a busy road with no pull-offs) or Poses dangerous risks to visitors (Ex: Venomous snakes without any knowledgeable staff or anti-venom)	Site access poses risks with mitigating factors (Ex: Venomous snakes with knowledgeable staff with anti-venom) or Dangerous access currently (Ex: Busy road no pull-offs) but plans in place to build pull-off or arrange for safe stopping.	Likelihood of health or safety concerns is limited.	Site access is moderately safe (Ex: pull-offs rather than parking lot) and there is staff trained to handle most issues that may arise.	Site access is safe (Ex: Parking lot) and has precautionary measures already implemented such as guard rails, paved paths and trained staff equipped to deal with most health and safety concerns.

Regulatory

Regulatory modifiers relate to restrictions specific to the site. An example is maximum occupancy regulations in Wilderness area's enabling legislation or a less restricting one, hunting season access restrictions to permit holders only during specified times of year.

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Regulations that prevent site access or the viewing experience.	Regulations that restrict access or inhibit the viewing experience but are being mitigated (Ex: Maximum occupancy regulations)	Regulations that restrict access but do not inhibit the viewing experience and provide alternatives.	No regulations or Ones that are necessary to ensure safety (Ex: Hunting regulations that prevent wildlife viewing during the season)	Regulations that encourage nature tourism or wildlife viewing

Political

Political modifiers relate to the site management agency. If the agency would not like to include access to a site for departmental reasons (social or cultural or economic) or others it would score lower (below 3) than a site for which the agency has support (above 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Political issues prevent the inclusion on the trail.	Politically sensitive site that is being mitigated (Ex: Windmills in Bureau County, Illinois that have pitted big business against environmentalists but have begun working together to mitigate the environmentalists' concerns – bird deaths) or One that has strict restrictions with mitigating factors.	No political issues surrounding the site.	Support throughout the agency and no political contention regarding the site.	Political support and promotion as a priority.

Economic

If inclusion of the site has a negative financial impact to site manager by increased visitation such as increased costs of trash collection, program management, trail maintenance, etc. it would receive a lower score (below 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
N/A	Poor	Fair	Average/ Good	Very Good	Excellent
	Inclusion would be a financial burden to the site or They simply cannot afford to be on the trail.	Start up costs and early maintenance costs would be high but plans are in place to mitigate these costs and recover at least a portion.	Inclusion has no economic impact on the site.	Site benefits economically from inclusion on the trail.	Site benefits economically from inclusion on the trail enough so that it can use those funds to initiate additional programs, projects and infrastructure that it otherwise would not without the economic benefit from the site's inclusion on the trail.

Portals

A **portal** is an interpreted welcome center that ushers the general public into the natural world. A portal offers the traveling public a destination, and serves as a door through which to enter nature. Only select waypoints are capable of functioning as portals, of combining the tourism function of a welcome center with the educational and recreational capabilities of a nature center.

Portal sites must meet the criteria for being a “waypoint.” In addition to containing one or more of the key values of a waypoint, portal sites offer multiple values that set them apart from the remaining waypoints. These sites serve as the best representation of the area, loop, or trail and/or are the best representations of the trail’s thematic itinerary. These are the sites that most epitomize the trail.

Values of portals (waypoints must possess one or more of these in order to qualify as a portal site):

- Serve as an exceptional representative of the area
 - Endemic plants, animals, habitats, etc.
 - Vast expanses of pristine habitat representative of the area (i.e. the presence of certain species at a given site may make it a portal site such as Roseate Spoonbill).
 - Large mammals such as elk, moose, bison, bears, dolphins, and whales are examples of mammals that are so conspicuous and approachable that they forge an immediate bond with the viewer and stimulate his interest in nature. The traveler does not need be an experienced natural historian with expensive binoculars and a portable library of field guides to appreciate these magnificent creatures.
- Large concentrations of wildlife function in a similar manner
 - Sandhill Cranes along the Platte River in Nebraska, Mexican Free-tailed Bats in Bracken Cave, or Monarchs in Michoacan all usher the uninitiated or inexperienced tourist into the world of nature tourism.
- Multidimensional
 - Multiple landscapes
 - Habitat diversity (ex. fresh and saltwater marsh as well as bottomland hardwood forest, etc.)
 - Wildlife diversity
- Unique attribute(s) that sets it apart from all other waypoints
 - Unique habitat, landscape, etc.
 - Endangered species
 - Icon species (Roseate Spoonbill)
- Usher tourists into the area
 - Site has informational brochures, kiosks, staffing, etc. (state parks with written material, educational tours, area information)
 - Serve as a central area from which other sites can be explored (welcome centers with area information and guides to the area)
- Accessibility / amenities
 - Easily accessible (i.e. off interstates or some easily accessible road)
 - Safe (i.e. safe pull-offs)
 - Well-maintained / adequate amenities
 - Well-maintained trails, etc.

Appendix B

MAINE HIGHLANDS REGION ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Sites 1-16 are listed in order as if traveling from Greenville.

1. Site Name: Little Moose Unit BP&L

Notes: The Little Moose Unit covers 13,500 acres in Moosehead Jct. and Big Moose Township. There are opportunities for hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, and water recreation. There are thirteen miles of hiking trails, and the chance to see a wide variety of habitats including, wetland, deciduous forest, coniferous forest, ponds, streams, and mountain peaks. The highest mountain on the unit is Big Moose Mountain at 3196' elevation. The area is well signed, has good access roads and parts of the unit are close enough to the village of Greenville that you can walk to them. There is a Gravel Pit Pond that is stocked with trout for children and disabled anglers. A paved path leads around the pond providing barrier free access. Wiggins Brook area is great for waterfowl and moose watching from canoes and kayaks.

Contact:

Western Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
PO Box 327
129 Main Street
Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 778-8231

2. Site Name: Kennebec River Outlets of Moosehead Lake

Notes: Access areas at both outlets are used for fishing access. The parking areas are adjacent to route 15. There are dams directly upstream, and water levels change rapidly. These areas are not recommended due to their size, location and current use.

Contact:

Kennebec Water Power Co.
One Portland Square
P.O. BOX 586
Portland, ME 04101

3. Site Name: Mount Kineo

Notes: Mount Kineo is one of the features of the Moosehead Lake Unit of BP&L. On the mountains east side is a 700-foot cliff rising out of Moosehead Lake. Peregrine Falcons and an assemblage of rare plants can be found on Mt. Kineo's cliffs and steep talus slopes. There is a hiking trail that leads to an observation platform at the summit. Near the base of the mountain is the historic site of a grand hotel. Native Americans used the stone, called Kineo-Traveler Rhyolite of Mount Kineo to make arrowheads and stone tools. The only public access to the Mount Kineo is by the ferry or private boat.

Contact:

Western Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
PO Box 327
129 Main Street
Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 778-8231

4. Site Name: NREC Interpretive Trail

Notes: The NREC Interpretive Trail has 18 stops and winds through historic farmland and a tree farm adjacent to the DOT picnic area on Route 15 south of Greenville. There is an informational kiosk with information about the NREC and trail guides. NREC plans to build an educational center on the site once funding becomes available. Other possible improvements include a parking area, a new brochure, and trail improvements.

Contact:

Natural Resource Education Center
PO Box 1329
Greenville, ME 04441

5. Site Name: West Shirley Bog

Notes: The West Shirley bog is a large bog that is surrounded by conifer forest. The access to the bog is in bad shape, trash and a junk car distract from the natural beauty of the area. Education is needed about fragile habitats of the bog. The site would also have to address potential vandalism. Directional signage, a developed parking area, and a carry in boat access would help make this area more attractive to nature tourists.

Contact:

Town of Shirley
P. O. Box 147
Shirley, ME 04485
(207) 695-3257

6. Site Name: A Fierce Chase X-C Trails

Notes: The Fierce Chase X-C Trail System is on Elliotsville road one mile from Route 15 in Monson. There are 14 kilometers of X-C trails that are also open during the summer for hiking. There is a parking area that can accommodate about 20 cars. There is an information kiosk at the parking area where visitors can sign in and pick up a copy of the trail map. There is also a warming hut with a restroom, woodstove, and food. Interpretive stations are found along the trails. The trails are open for skiing from 9:00 a.m. – midnight. The area was recognized as the leading cross-country ski area in the USA for ecological operations, environmental education,

and natural resource conservation. If funding becomes available this site would benefit from expanded interpretive programs, signage and a new trail brochure.

Contact:

Owned by John Chase and Susan Fierce Chase.
A Fierce Chase Cross Country Ski Trails
230 Elliotsville Road
Monson, ME 04464
(207) 997-3971
www.afiercechase.com

7. Site Name: Borestone Mountain Audubon Sanctuary

Notes: Borestone Mountain Audubon Sanctuary is only accessible by hiking along the nature trail. There is a Nature Center half way up mountain on the edge of Sunrise Pond. The Nature Trail continues to the East Summit and there is a guide that describes features found along the way. The main trail gains 1,200' elevation in 3 miles. Historic lodges are located on the edge of Sunset Pond. Interpretive programs are offered on summer weekends. The Sanctuary covers 1,639 acres surrounding Borestone Mountain. It is open Memorial Day through October 31. There is a daily fee charged. Current needs are expanded parking and renovations to the historic lodges to offer more programs.

Contact:

Maine Audubon
20 Gilsland Farm Road
Falmouth, ME 04105
(207) 631-4050

8. Site Name: Peaks-Kenny State Park

Notes: Peaks-Kenny State Park is on the shores of Sebec Lake. It covers 839 acres. There is a camping area that includes flush toilets, hot water showers, and sites in a woodland setting. A lifeguard, picnic area, and bathhouse with showers are found at the beach, which is used by campers and day use visitors. There are hiking trails and amphitheater programs.

Contact:

Peaks-Kenny State Park
500 State Park Road
Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426
Park season: (207) 564-2003
Off-season: (207) 941-4014

9. Site Name: AMC Katahdin Iron Works Property

Notes: In 2003 the Appalachian Mountain Club purchased 37,000 acres in the 100-mile wilderness region including Little Lyford Pond Camps. From the camps there is hiking, skiing,

snowshoeing, swimming, canoeing and kayaking and fishing currently available. There is planned future development of recreational facilities including over 100 miles of hiking trails. The management plan for this area integrates habitat protection, recreation, education, and sustainable forestry. AMC is planning to allow traditional recreational uses such as hunting and fishing and also expand offerings to include paddling, hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing. A few special areas in this area include the West Branch of the Pleasant River, a wetland complex of over 1,000 acres, including a 300-acre bog, the Barren/Chairback range, and Baker, Whitecap, and Little Spruce Mountains. Needed improvements include more signage, guides to the area, and interpretive programs.

Contact:

Appalachian Mountain Club
PO Box 310
Greenville, ME 04441
(207) 466-2727
www.outdoors.org

10. Site Name: Gulf Hagus

Notes: Gulf Hagus is along the Appalachian Trail. Access to the trail involves a stream crossing, not possible during high water. There is a proposal to develop an access trail from the north. To preserve the quality of the area only trail maintenance and guide to the area are needed.

Contact:

Maine Appalachian Trail Club
P.O. Box 283
Augusta, ME 04332-0283

11. Site Name: Pleasant River Walk

Notes: The trail was developed as a community project along the river between Brownville and Brownville Jct. Eagles are commonly seen, there are other riparian species also present. The trail is on private lands. This site would benefit from highway signage, interpretive signs and a detailed trail guide.

Contact:

Three Rivers Community Alliance
PO Box 163
Milo, ME 04463

12. Site Name: PCSWCD Demonstration Forest

Notes: The Piscataquis County Soil & Water Conservation District owns this site. There is an outdoor classroom, restroom and interpretive trail. There are various forest types and a few different management practices are demonstrated. Historically the land was managed as a farm. Improvements needed include wayfinding signage, and trail signs.

Contact:

Piscataquis County Soil & Water Conservation District
1073 West Main Street
Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426
(207) 564-2321

13. Site Name: Lilly Bay State Park

Notes: The Park covers 924 acres. There are two campgrounds that include 91 campsites; two boat launch sites with boat slips; swim area; a day use area with a playground; and a hiking trail that follows the shoreline. Outdoor activities at the Park include swimming, boating, camping and watching wildlife. In the winter, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and ice fishing attract visitors to the park.

Contact:

Lily Bay State Park
HC 76, Box 425
Greenville, ME 04441
Park season: (207) 695-2700
Off-season (207) 941-4014

14. Site Name: Big Spencer Mountain

Notes: Big Spencer Mountain is now under new state ownership thanks in part to the Forest Society of Maine and the West Branch Project. There is a Fire Wardens Trail to the Summit and a cabin half way up. There is also a fire tower on the summit. The trailhead is difficult to find, there is limited parking and it is a one hour drive from Greenville. Signage, trail improvements, and parking need upgraded.

Contact:

Western Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
PO Box 327
129 Main Street
Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 778-8231

15. Site Name: Namakanta Unit BP&L

Notes: The Namakanta unit offers excellent backcountry recreational opportunities. There are developed campsites. Fishing, hunting, hiking, and paddling are popular activities. There is abundant wildlife, lakes, ponds, wetlands, rivers, streams, and mountain brooks. One of the main features of the unit is the special designated backcountry recreation area known as Debsconeag Backcountry that is 9,200 acres. There are 56 lakes and ponds over a quarter acre in size on the unit. There are also small 200-year-old stands of northern white cedar, pine-hemlock,

spruce-fir and northern hardwoods. There is one significant cultural heritage site on the unit. Indian Camp at Pleasant Point Camps on Fourth Debsconeag Lake is uniquely decorated on the inside with a birch bark mosaic. Local stories say it was crafted by a Native American woman while her husband, a trapper, worked the area. Improvements needed at this site are road signs, improved access to trails and ponds, and a guide to the area.

Contact:

Eastern Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
Airport Road
PO Box 415
Old Town, ME 04468
(207) 827-1818

16. Site Name: Ebemee Lakes

Notes: Ebemee Lakes (Upper and Lower) are safe paddling waters located north of Brownville. The lakes are known as a significant Watchable Wildlife area. Improvements to access the lakes would be necessary before the public is directed to use the site. It is unknown at this time if the town would be interested in creating an access, or if it would be a state managed site.

Contact:

None

33. Site Name: Moosehead Marine Museum

Notes: Cruises aboard the historic steamboat Katahdin are the main attraction. Food is available on the boat and there are a variety of cruise options. The boat is listed as a National Historical Landmark. There is a small museum that features the boating heritage of the region. Open Memorial Day – October 10, schedule varies.

Contact:

Moosehead Marine Museum
PO Box 1151
Greenville, ME 04441
207-695-2716

34. Site Name: Moosehead Historical Museum

Notes: The Museum is open from June – September. There is a \$4 fee for admission and tour. There is a historical house that has an 1880's kitchen with many appliances and cooking utensils. There is also a Lumbermans museum and Native American artifacts. There is a small gift shop on site.

Contact:

PO Box 1116

Greenville, ME 04441
207-695-2909

35. Site Name: Pittston Farm

Notes: This historical lodge served as the hub of Great Northern Paper Company's lumber operation in the West Branch area. There is a restaurant, and gift shop in the main lodge. There are also cabins and carriage-house rooms available. The Barn holds a small museum with artifacts and photos of the logging era. Pittston Farm provides a base camp for a north woods experience including hiking, deer and moose watching, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, and ice fishing. There could be some improvements to attract more nature tourists such as a guide to area hot spots for wildlife viewing or guided wildlife watching and nature photography tours.

Contact:

Pittston Farm Lodge, Inc.
P.O. Box 525
Rockwood, ME 04478
Phone: 207-280-0000

36. Site Name: B52 Site

Notes: A short trail leads through the site where a B52 crashed in January 1963. The wreckage is scattered throughout the area and there is a slate monument with the names of those onboard. There are paths tramped down throughout the area. There are nearby clear cuts and plantations that provide a variety of bird and wildlife habitat. Improvements needed at the site include better parking and an established trail to prevent damage to the wreckage.

Contact:

Town of Greenville
Po Box 1109
Greenville, ME 04441
(207) 695-2421
www.greenvilleme.com

37. Site Name: Katahdin Iron Works

Notes: This site managed by the Bureau of Parks and Lands is a historic iron works. Katahdin Iron Works operated for a total of about 25 years between 1843 and 1890. Ore was mined nearby and there was an abundant supply of wood for charcoal to fuel the furnace. Today there are interpretive panels that describe the process to make pig iron.

Contact:

Katahdin Iron Works State Historic Site
c/o Bureau of Parks and Lands
106 Hogan Road

Bangor, ME 04401
(207) 941-4014

17. Site Name: Seboeis Unit BP&L

Notes: The Seboeis unit is known mainly for the water recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities available. There are developed campsites on the unit, most of which are accessible only by boat. There is a boat launch and small parking area. Habitats found on the unit include the lake, small ponds, bog, and conifer forests. The area would benefit from more signage about what recreation opportunities are available and the various habitats and wildlife found on the unit.

Contact:

Eastern Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
Airport Road
PO Box 415
Old Town, ME 04468
(207) 827-1818

18. Site Name: Bait Hole X-C Trails

Notes: Bait Hole Trails offer free skiing on Katahdin Forest Management, and Great Lakes Power Company lands near Millinocket. Volunteers maintain the trails. The Chamber of Commerce has photocopied trail maps available. Improvements needed include improved signage at the trailhead, trail markers along the trails and a detailed trail guide.

Contact:

Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce
1029 Central Street
Millinocket, ME 04462
207-723-4443

19. Site Name: Jerry Pond Picnic Area

Notes: Jerry Pond Picnic Area is a park on the edge of a pond near town. From the pond there are views of Mount Katahdin. There is an old swing set and paved paths to the water. The area needs improvements such as fixing the access road, developing a walking path and interpretive trail and fixing or removing the old playground structures. Directional signs are needed from Route 11.

Contact:

Office of the Town Manager
197 Penobscot Avenue

Millinocket, Maine 04462
(207) 723-7000

20. Site Name: Northern Timber Cruisers X-C Trails

Notes: These trails start from the Northern Timber Cruisers snowmobile clubhouse. The trails are for X-C skiing only and volunteers groom them. There is a snowmobile museum at the clubhouse. It is possible to connect to the Bait Hole trail system from here as well. Improvements needed to these trails include a separate parking area, and new trail guides and signage.

Contact:

Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce
1029 Central Street
Millinocket, ME 04462
207-723-4443

21. Site Name: River Pond Nature Trail

Notes: River Pond Nature Trail is owned and managed by Katahdin Forest Management. Currently there is no funding or staff to maintain trail and interpretive stations. Along the trail visitors can learn about various forest practices and view evidence of historical logging operations. As the trail passes River Pond there are great views of Mount Katahdin. The access road and trail need maintenance as well as updating the signs along the trail and printing a new guide.

Contact:

Katahdin Forest Management
1 Katahdin Ave.
Millinocket, ME 04462
(207) 723-2145

22. Site Name: Ripogenus Gorge

Notes: The Gorge is heavily used and regulated for white water rafting from spring to fall. There are controlled releases throughout the summer to create the flows necessary for rafting. There are several undeveloped viewing points off of the Golden Road, but most have no trails or safety measures. Bureau of Parks and Lands developed a site for visitors to picnic and view the river and rafters at the Cribworks.

Contact:

Northern Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
45 Radar Rd.
Ashland, ME 04732
(207) 435-7963

23. Site Name: Medway Road

Notes: The Medway Road also known as the Rice Farm Road is a paved road that follows the West Branch of the Penobscot River. The road passes through wetlands and forested areas. There are several old coal ash roads in the area that could be easily developed into hiking trails.

Contact:

Office of the Town Manager
197 Penobscot Avenue
Millinocket, Maine 04462
(207) 723-7000

24. Site Name: Dolby Pond Picnic Area

Notes: This DOT picnic area is on Route 11, which is a busy road. Dolby pond is an impoundment of the West Branch of the Penobscot River. There are two picnic tables with shelters and grills. There is a porta-potty and trash collection on site. From the picnic area there are views across the pond of Mount Katahdin. There are five pairs of nesting Bald Eagles in the area. This site would benefit from a trail that allows visitors to get away from the road. A canoe access would also be useful to those that want to explore the pond.

Contact:

Maine DOT

25. Site Name: Medway Recreational Park

Notes: The recreational park is on the East Branch of the Penobscot River. There is a boat launch, picnic area, playground, beach, snowmobile trail, restroom, sand volleyball, tennis and basketball courts and a baseball field. A snowmobile trail follows the river north to the clubhouse. The area would be more attractive to visitors if the snowmobile trail could be used as a hiking trail during the summer months.

Contact:

Medway Town Office
HCR 86 Box 320
School Street
Medway, ME 04460
(207) 746-9531

26. Site Name: Grindstone Falls Picnic Area

Notes: This DOT picnic area is on the side of Route 11. Route 11 is heavily traveled with log trucks that take away some of the enjoyment of the site. Picnic tables with shelters and grills are on the riverbank near a set of rapids. There is a railroad trestle just upstream. Interpretation on

the historical use of the river at the site would be a benefit to visitors. The contrast of historical log drives to the trucking of logs would be clearly evident at the site.

Contact:

Maine DOT

27. Site Name: Whetstone Falls Campsites

Notes: These state campsites are on the East Branch of the Penobscot River. There is currently a lot of trash at the site. Signs of overuse are evident such as trampled vegetation and erosion. There is a log road and bridge adjacent to the sites that take away from the value of the site.

Contact:

Unknown

28. Site Name: Shin Falls

Notes: Shin Falls is a waterfall with three drops on private land. There is a path that leads to the falls. There is not a developed trail or safety features such as ropes or stairs near the falls. Parking is on an old log landing.

Contact:

Unknown

29. Site Name: Seboies River Campsite

Notes: This site is on the edge of the river just off Grand Lake Road. There is room for two sites. Anglers primarily use these sites. This is the beginning of the Seboies River canoe trip.

Contact:

Unknown

30. Site Name: Sawtelle Deadwater WMA

Notes: This Wildlife Management Area is 207 acres in size. The Deadwater flows approximately 2.5 miles and is surrounded by marsh and conifer forest. The area is great for watching deer, bear, and moose. Many bird species can be found here as well. Improvements needed at the site are more wayfinding signs leading from Grand Lake Road, better parking and a wildlife viewing guide.

Contact:

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Regional Office
HC 67, Box 1066
Enfield, ME 04493
207-732-4132

31. Site Name: Scraggly Lake BP&L

Notes: The Scraggly Lake Unit covers 10,000 acres north of the Grand Lake Road. The lake is popular for trout fishing. There are also ponds, brooks, and bogs that provide habitat for waterfowl and wading birds. Camping is popular in the twelve-site campground and there is a boat launch as well. There are developed hiking trails and old roads to access more habitat types in the unit. Over 200 wildlife species have been documented on this unit. This site would also benefit from a wildlife guide and interpretive signs.

Contact:

Northern Region Office
Bureau of Parks and Lands
45 Radar Rd.
Ashland, ME 04732
(207) 435-7963

32. Site Name: Baxter State Park North Entrance

Notes: Baxter State Park covers 204,733 acres. The park was a gift from former Governor Percival P. Baxter to the people of the state of Maine. Within the park there are 46 mountain peaks and ridges, 18 exceeding 3,000 feet elevation. There are 186 miles of hiking trails. Also in the park are campgrounds, lean-tos and remote campsites available. The Park is carry in carry out. There are many opportunities for wildlife viewing around the park. Opportunities vary by season and park rangers can assist visitors into locating prime locations. The southern portion of the park receives the greatest use with climbing Katahdin the most popular activity. There are established limits for use and often they reach capacity during the summer. The north side of the park is more remote and is better suited for the day hiker and nature tourist. Traveling on Route 159 from Patten to the Grand Lake Road accesses the North entrance.

Contact:

Baxter State Park
64 Balsam Drive
Millinocket, Maine 04462
(207) 723-5140
www.baxterstateparkauthority.com

38. Site Name: The Boom House

Notes: The Boom House is located on an Island in Ambajejus Lake. The Boom House is a museum of the Great Northern Paper Company. Inside there is a historical collection of log driving tools and other displays from Great Northern Paper Company's past. There is a trail that leads to the house that is passable in low water. Improvements would be necessary before visitors should be directed to the trail. Another possible opportunity would be to have a scheduled ferry service for visitors.

Contact:

Katahdin Forest Management
1 Katahdin Ave.
Millinocket, ME 04462
(207) 723-2145

39. Site Name: Patten Lumbermen's Museum

Notes: There are nine buildings that contain 4,000 artifacts. There are authentic logging camps, kitchens, tools, and equipment. The museum also has 1,000 historical photos in its collection. Improvements that would help this site include improved parking and off-season self guided tour.

Contact:

Patten Lumbermen's Museum
PO Box 300
Patten, ME 04765
207-528-2650

WESTERN MOUNTAINS ASSESSMENT

1. Site Name: Rangeley Lakes Historical Society

Notes: The Rangeley Lakes Historical Society owns a small museum in town that contains information on the areas history including logging, sporting camps, and the start of Maine Guides.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

2. Site Name: Hatchery Brook

Notes: Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust owns this site near the town of Rangeley. There are hiking trails and lakeside picnic tables. The area was once farmed and old house and barn foundations and stonewalls can be seen. Improved parking and interpretive signage would improve the site.

Contact:

Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust
PO Box 249
Oquossoc, ME 04964
(207) 864-7311
www.rlht.org

3. Site Name: Hunter Cove Wildlife Sanctuary

Notes: Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust owns the site. There are hiking trails and picnic spots on Hunter Cove of Rangeley Lake. The forest is uneven aged mixed forest. The trails need tread improvement due to wet areas. Interpretive signage would help visitors learn about species found at the site. The signage and parking at the site are adequate.

Contact:

Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust
PO Box 249
Oquossoc, ME 04964
(207) 864-7311
www.rlht.org

4. Site Name: Wilhelm Reich Museum

Notes: The Wilhelm Reich Museum also called Orgonon was created to teach about the work of Reich. There is the Orgone Energy Observatory, a conference center and museum and also nature trails. Orgonon's Natural Science Program offers year round environmental studies and recreational activities. There is a bird watching blind on site as well.

Contact:

Wilhelm Reich Museum
Orgonon
PO Box 687
Rangeley, ME 04970
www.wilhelmreichmuseum.org

5. Site Name: Bald Mountain

Notes: The Bureau of Parks and Lands owns Bald Mountain. There is a well-maintained trail that leads to a fire tower and picnic tables on the summit. Access is well marked with a parking lot and trailhead kiosk. There are great views from the summit of Rangeley and Richardson Lakes as well as other mountain peaks. The habitat is open hardwood forest on the lower portion of the trail that transitions to upper elevation spruce/fir forest at the summit.

Contact:

Bureau of Parks and Lands
129 Main Street, PO Box 327
Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 778-8231
http://www.state.me.us/doc/parks/programs/db_search/index.html

6. Site Name: Big Falls

Notes: Big Falls is a single drop waterfall on the Cupsuptic River. Big Falls lies within the Pingree Forest Partnership Lands, 762,192 acres were protected by a conservation easement. The site is hard to find along logging roads on private land. There is no trail, only an unmarked path that leads to the falls. There is no signage at the site. There is limited parking at an old bridge crossing. This site is not recommended because of the location and lack of infrastructure.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

7. Site Name: Forest Legacy

Notes: Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust owns the site. There are hiking trails, and lakeside camping and picnic sites. Visitors can also access the area by boat. Improvements needed at the site include developing a parking area and improving the trail system. On-site interpretation would also be useful.

Contact:

Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust
PO Box 249
Oquossoc, ME 04964
(207) 864-7311

8. Site Name: Aziscoos Mountain

Notes: The Aziscoos Mountain trailhead is on Route 16 near Aziscoos Lake and the trail leads to the summit. The habitat is mainly spruce/fir forest. From the summit there are views of many other mountain peaks and area lakes in Maine and New Hampshire. Improvements to the parking area are needed. Signage and trail improvements would also make the site more user-friendly.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

9. Site Name: Rangeley Lake State Park

Notes: Rangeley Lake State Park is on the southern shore of Rangeley Lake. The park covers 869 acres and is famous for the landlocked salmon and trout fishing in Rangeley Lake. Hiking, picnicking, camping, wildlife watching, and photography are popular activities at the park. There is a nesting Bald Eagle, waterfowl, and a variety of songbirds found at the park. Minor improvements such as a kiosk would improve the site.

Contact:

Rangeley Lake State Park
HC 32 Box 5000
Rangeley, ME 04970
Park season: (207) 864-3858
Off-season (207) 624-6080
http://www.state.me.us/doc/parks/programs/db_search/index.html

10. Site Name: Route 17 Overlook

Notes: Route 17 Overlook offers views to the northeast with Rangeley Lake and Saddleback Mountain the dominate features. There is a large parking area and clearing. There is some vandalism on the rocks that surround the parking area. A kiosk or interpretive panels telling visitors what they are looking at would improve the site.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

11. Site Name: The Bemis Trail

Notes: The Bemis Trail leads from route 17 to the Bemis Stream Trail. There is no trailhead parking or signs to direct visitors.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

12. Site Name: Height of Land

Notes: The Height of Land site is a roadside pull-off overlooking Mooselookmeguntic and Upper Richardson lakes and the surrounding forested mountains. The Appalachian Trail crosses the road here. There is limited parking on this steep mountainside pass. MEDOT is planning road improvements in this area and there is potential to improve parking and install signage.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

13. Site Name: Bemis Stream Trail

Notes: The Bemis Stream Trail follows Bemis Stream up through a forested valley. The trail is on private land managed by Wagner Forest Management. There is no trailhead parking or signs for the trail. A developed trailhead and signage would help visitors find the trail. Improvements to the trail tread would make the trail usable for a wider range of visitors.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

14. Site Name: Angel Falls

Notes: Parking for the site is on the sides of a back road. An access road leads down a steep hill to a gravel pit and skid roads. The trail is on private land managed by Wagner Forest Management. The trail leads to the waterfall crossing the main brook once and the tributary brook three times. Angel Falls is Maine's highest single-drop waterfall.

The private road leading to the trailhead is in rough shape and could use some grading. The trail needs improvements such as blazing and signage. The stream crossings are dangerous because of slippery rocks and changing water levels. Improvements needed include trail blazing, signage, and foot-bridges.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

15. Site Name: Coos Canyon

Notes: Roadside DOT picnic area at a small gorge with waterfalls. The site is leased by DOT. Interpretive signage about geology would be appropriate here.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

16. Site Name: Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Rail Road

Notes: The SR&RL RR is an ongoing project by a private group. They are trying to restore the old rail line and acquire cars. Guided scenic trips are offered during the summer.

Contact:

Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes RR
PO Box B
Phillips, ME 04966
<http://www.srrl-rr.org>

17. Site Name: Smalls Falls

Notes: Small Falls is a roadside picnic area with trails to waterfalls on two streams. There is a fence along the edge of one set of falls. There are some areas of open ledges. There are no established trails to the upper falls or second falls. Improvements to the trail would make this a better site. There are also historic river driving remnants that could be highlighted in interpretive materials.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

18. Site Name: Piazza Rock

Notes: Piazza Rock is a half-day hike on the AT to a large overhanging rock and small caves. The Appalachian Trail leads through conifer forest, past small streams on the way to Piazza

Rock. The Trail is well marked and maintained. The parking area along route 4 can hold about a dozen vehicles.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

19. Site Name: Mountain Pond Trail

Notes: Trail on private land that managed by Wagner Forest Management goes through an actively managed forest to a pond. There are a variety of forest types and management techniques seen along the trail as it leads up the mountainside to the pond. There is very limited parking along the road and the trail is lightly blazed with paint. Expanded parking with trailhead signs would improve the site. The trail could use improvements to the tread and some sections are very steep and could use stairs. There are also wet sections that could use some type of step stone or bog bridges.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

20. Site Name: Cascade Stream

Notes: Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust owns the Cascade Stream site. There is a short trail that leads to a gorge and several small waterfalls. A small parking area and kiosk greet visitors to the site. There should be more signage to guide visitors from Route 4 to the trailhead. There is a picnic table in a sunny area overlooking the stream that makes a great place to enjoy the view. More trail improvements are planned for the area.

Contact:

Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust
PO Box 249
Oquossoc, ME 04964
(207) 864-7311
www.rlht.org

21. Site Name: Dallas Hill Overlook

Notes: Newly constructed overlook just outside the village of Rangeley. The overlook looks over the village and Rangeley Lake.

Contact:

Rangeley Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 317
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-2710
www.rangeley.org

22. Site Name: Rangeley Logging Museum

Notes: The Rangeley Logging Museum has one building and one shed. There is an annual woodsmen's event held during the summer. The Museum is open seasonally on weekends. Improvements needed include better parking and more room for exhibits.

Contact:

Rangeley Lakes Region Logging Museum
Box 154
Rangeley, ME 04970
(207) 864-3939
http://mason.gmu.edu/~myocom/logging_museum/

23. Site Name: Eustis Ridge Picnic Area

Notes: This small picnic area overlooks Flagstaff Lake and the Bigelow Range. Trees, power lines and houses obstruct views. There is no toilet and limited parking.

Contact:

Sugarloaf Area Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 2151
Kingfield, ME 04947
(207) 235-2100
<http://66.223.19.200/WebDisp/index.cfm>

24. Site Name: Bigelow Unit BP&L

Notes: The Bigelow Unit covers 36,000 acres of the Bigelow Range and Land around Flagstaff Lake. There are seven mountain peaks, one summit is over 4,000-feet. There are Bicknell's Thrushes that nest in the higher elevations. The Summits have alpine communities. The lower elevations have deciduous & coniferous forests, ponds, bogs, marshes, and open fields. The Unit is bisected by the Appalachian Trail. There are also side trails that give hikers many day hiking opportunities. There is a campground on the East side of the unit on the shores of Flagstaff Lake. The area is popular in the winter for snowmobiling.

Contact:

Bureau of Parks and Lands
129 Main Street, PO Box 327
Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 778-8231
http://www.state.me.us/doc/parks/programs/db_search/index.html

25. Site Name: Narrow Gauge Trail

Notes: This trail is on the old narrow gage rail line that follows the Carrabassett River. There are excellent views of the Bigelow Range and Sugarloaf Mountain. Parking at the Southeast end is at the Town Offices of Carrabassett. There are signs in place to guide visitors.

Contact:

Town of Carrabassett

1001 Carriage Road

Carrabassett Valley, ME 04947

(207) 235-2645

<http://www.carrabassettvalley.org/index.asp>

DOWNEAST REGION

1. Birdsacre Sanctuary

This 40-acre wooded sanctuary is the home of ornithologist Cordelia J. Stanwood. There are eight walking trails and three small ponds. The home is also a museum with family furnishings and mounted birds.

2. Schoodic Peninsula

The Schoodic Peninsula borders Washington County to the south. The region has developed a national scenic byway along Route 186.

3. Petit Manan NWR

Petit Manan NWR is comprised of one mainland location and a series of islands along the Maine coast. The islands host extensive seabird colonies and are only accessible by boat. The mainland site is located along Pigeon Point road and is accessible (although difficult to locate) by auto. The trails there bisect a variety of coastal habitats including white cedar swamp and blueberry barrens.

4. McLellan Park

This park in the town of Millbridge is a rugged coastal park that has camping available and short trails with scenic vistas.

5. Millbridge Historical Society

The Millbridge Historical Society museum has exhibits on lobstering, shipbuilding, and the Millbridge waterfront. The museum is open from May to September and is located on Route 1 in Millbridge.

6. Millbridge Village Marina

There is a Downeast Fisheries Trail sign at the town marina in Millbridge. The sign teaches visitors about lobster fishing, local history, and the effect on ocean currents on the local fisheries and the climate.

7. Donnell Pond Public Reserved Land

This unit includes more than 14,000 acres of remote forested land with lakes, secluded ponds, and mountains. There are maintained hiking trails, boat launches and campsites.

8. Great Heath Public Reserved Land

The Great Heath is a bog in Washington County that includes the Pleasant River. Canoeists can enjoy flat-water paddling along the meandering channel.

9. Wild Salmon Resource Center

Atlantic Salmon are raised at the Pleasant River hatchery to be released in Downeast Maine rivers. The hatchery is located next to Columbia Falls where a half dozen species of fish migrate up the falls to reach their spawning grounds.

10. Beals Island Regional Shellfish Hatchery

The hatchery grows scallops and steamers that are released onto the tidal mudflats along the Maine coast. This helps to maintain and restore their populations. Visitors are welcome at the hatchery and there is an educational resource center open during the summer. The village of Jonesport provides a glimpse into the Maine fishing culture before the demise of much of the fishery (finfish).

11. Great Wass Island Preserve

Beals Island and Great Wass Island are remote hideaways, with the exception that the secondary housing market has altered coastal properties. During low tides extensive mud flats are exposed to migrant shorebirds. Great Wass Island Preserve is a property of Maine Nature Conservancy, protecting an old growth forest and a variety of rare plants. The ever-present fog and mist enveloping the forest is reminiscent of a rain forest in the Pacific Northwest. There are boat tours to view puffins, whales, and seabirds.

12. Roque Bluffs State Park

The state park offers parking, restrooms, and beach access. The shore offers a view of the Atlantic and extensive beaches that host gulls, terns, and shorebirds. Although the park has limited amenities the access to the beach is important in this region of limited accessibility.

13. Machias River Project

The 25,000 -acre project combines outright purchase with conservation easements to protect over 210 miles of the Machias River. A 1,000-foot corridor on each side of the river and six major tributaries is protected from future development activities but traditional backcountry activities are allowed.

14. Bad Little Falls

Another stop along the Downeast Fisheries Trail, visitors can learn about the how fish migrate thousands of miles to return to the rivers each year for spawning. The interpretive sign is located in the park that is along the banks of the Machias River.

15. Jasper Beach, Fort O'Brien

A unique cobble beach is available for visitors to explore near the historic Fort O'Brien

16. Western Head Preserve

Part of the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Western Head Preserve features a three mile trail that leads through the spruce-fir forest to Western Head. Birders can expect to find boreal species such as Spruce Grouse, Boreal Chickadee, and Black-backed Woodpeckers.

17. Cutler Coast Public Reserved Land

This 12,000-acre unit contains almost five miles of dramatic cliff-bound ocean shore. Other habitats include grasslands, meadows, and windswept coastal headlands. Cutler is another traditional Maine fishing village, with at least one local boat owner offering trips out to see puffins, whales, and other sea life.

18. Commissary Point WMA

Commissary Point is a state wildlife management area that covers 433-acres. White-tailed Deer, Moose, Hare and Bobcat can be found here. Habitats include boreal forest and regenerating grassland.

19. Boot Head Preserve

Boot Head is a 690-acre preserve that encompasses mixed forest, peat bog, rocky coast, and a pebble stone beach. There is a trail that is less than 3 miles, but features several habitat types. The majority of the trail goes through spruce forest that is ideal for boreal chickadees. There are great views from the overlooks.

20. Hamilton Cove Preserve

The Hamilton Cove Preserve features early succession alder habitat that attracts Chestnut Sided Warblers and Common Yellowthroat. The trail leads along the cove where waterfowl can be found that include Common Eiders and Red-breasted Mergansers.

21. Quoddy Head State Park & Lighthouse

Both of these properties are accessible from Route 1 near Lubec. The tidal exchange in Passamaquoddy Bay approaches 26 feet, so low tide exposes broad expanses of mud flat to shorebirds and other water birds. The view of the Bay of Fundy from Quoddy Head Lighthouse is spectacular, and a walk along the beach at the state park offers an impressive perspective of a peat bog deposit.

22. Lubec Town Landing

A Downeast Fisheries Trail sign teaches visitors about the sardine and aquaculture industries. From the landing visitors can see fish pens to the north. Processing plants along the shore process herring into canned sardines. While a visitor is in Lubec they should also visit the South Lubec Sand Bar. The sand bar is one of the best places in the state to witness shorebird migration between the middle of August and Labor Day.

23. Gleason Cove boat launch (scenic view)

Another boat launch with a scenic view of Passamaquoddy Bay. Shorebirds sometimes congregate on the mudflats.

24. Roosevelt Campobello International Park

This international park (jointly funding by the U.S. and Canadian governments) preserves the Roosevelt family summer retreat. Franklin Roosevelt actually contracted his crippling case of polio while summering on the island. With the aging of the Roosevelt generation the park is beginning to emphasize the habitats that are also preserved within the park. Accessible by bridge from Lubec.

25. Little Augusta boat launch (scenic view)

Small parking area and boat launch that offers a view of Passamaquoddy Bay.

26. Cobscook State Park

There are numerous hiking trails with the Cobscook area. A guide of these trails is available from the Quoddy Regional Land Trust. The park offers a variety of services (camping, RV sites), and borders the coast of Passamaquoddy Bay.

27. Great Works Wildlife Management Area

640-acres with pond, marsh, upland habitat, that provides a home for nesting waterfowl.

28. Rocky Lake Public Reserved Land

More than 10,000-acres of glacial landscape typical of down east Maine make up this unit of public reserved land. There are low forested ridges, meandering rivers and streams bordered by wetlands and shallow rocky lakes with many islands.

29. Reversing Falls

The tidal exchange within Passamaquoddy Bay serves as a force for a number of remarkable phenomena. These falls “reverse” direction depending on a rising or falling tide. Unfortunately this is also one of the most difficult sites to find in the entire Downeast region.

30. Cobscook Bay Scenic Overlook

This scenic overlook off Route 190 has a Downeast Fisheries Trail interpretive sign that describes Cobscook Bay, clamming and the port of Eastport.

31. Shackford State Park

The park offers excellent views of Cobscook Bay, Lubec, and the port at Estes Head. While overlooking the bay visitors have the chance to see the salmon pens in the bay.

32. Quoddy Maritime Museum and Visitors Center

Eastport is another one of Maine’s Downeast fishing communities. There is a 70-foot schooner will take people out to see whales and seabirds. There was once a proposal to create the Passamaquoddy Bay Tidal Project. There is now a large model of the project on display at the Museum.

33. St. Croix Island International Park

This historic site is the site of the first French settlement in North America in 1604. There are historic markers, interpretive signs, and a series of sculptures marking this site (nothing of the original settlement remains).

34. Downeast Heritage Museum

The Downeast Heritage Museum is a multi-million dollar nonprofit project to unlock, interpret, and preserve the natural and cultural heritage of Downeast Maine. The Museum is located on the St. Croix River, Maine's border with New Brunswick, Canada. There is a walkway that starts just outside the museum that is the origin point of the East Coast Greenway, a walking and biking trail that will eventually link Calais, Maine and Key West, Florida.

35. Moosehorn NWR

The refuge consists of two units. The Baring Unit covers 17,200 acres and is located off U.S. Route 1 north of Calais, Maine. The 7,200 acre Edmunds Unit borders the tidal waters of

Cobscook Bay near Dennysville. There is an eagle watching facility off of Route 1 that is accessible by wheelchair and includes free mounted binoculars. There are 50 miles of trails throughout both units although access is confusing. The refuge is a key research facility for American Woodcock. There are 28 breeding species of warblers. Moose are occasionally seen in the refuge. There are two Bald Eagle nests, one is just off Route 1

36. Grand Lake Stream

Grand Lake Stream, although only 45 minutes from Calais, the community is situated within nearly 2 million unbroken acres of northern woodlands. Grand Lake Stream has been famous for fishing for decades, and there are a number of American plan lodges that function below capacity for non-fishing visitors. Although Grand Lake Stream has made few efforts to expand beyond fishing, many of the lodge owners express an interest in diversifying their offerings. Visitors to Grand Lake Stream can take a step back in time to experience the traditional Maine sporting camp. Modern conveniences are available such as hot showers, electricity and internet access, if you need to stay connected. The Registered Maine Guides can lead their visitors on a number of adventures depending on the season. Grand Lake Stream is famous for its Landlocked Salmon fishing as well as Small-mouth Bass fishing. In the fall upland bird hunting is the main attraction with many excellent covers of Ruffed Grouse and Woodcock. In addition to the traditional sporting camp activities there are a number of other outdoor pursuits that one can enjoy. Bird watching is excellent in the area with migratory songbirds flooding in during the spring. Guides know the locations of area Bald Eagle and Loon nests for those that haven't had the chance to view them up close. Moose watching is popular throughout the summer. There are miles of hiking trails and logging roads to explore.

The other thing that makes Grand Lake Stream a special place is the work that the Downeast Lakes Forestry Partnership is doing. The Partnership has conserved 27,000 acres of forestland in the Downeast Lakes Region. Included in that acreage is a 3,560 acre Ecological Reserve where activities will be limited to preserve a part of the area for scientific study. The conserved land also includes 445 miles of shoreline on the areas lakes, ponds and streams.

Appendix C

Visitors Centers – Existing and Proposed

Organization	Center Name	Address	Town	Telephone
	Milo/Brownville Information Center (proposed)			
	Monson Information Center (proposed)			
Farmington-Wilton Chamber of Commerce	Farmington-Wilton Chamber of Commerce (existing)	575 Wilton Rd.	Farmington	207.778.4215
Penobscot Nation Education & Cultural Center	Penobscot Nation Center/Millinocket (proposed)	358 Levant Rd.	Kenduskeag	207.581.1424
Old Canada Road Scenic Byway	OCR National Scenic Byway Welcome Center/Jackman (proposed)	PO Box 301	Bingham	207.672.3971
Mountain Counties Heritage	Mountain Counties Heritage Center/Farmington (proposed)	PO Box 508	Farmington	207.778.3885
Skowhegan Chamber of Commerce	Skowhegan Chamber of Commerce (new building proposed)	23 Commercial St.	Skowhegan	207.474.3621
Natural Resource Education Center	Greenville/NREC (proposed)	PO Box 1329	Greenville	207.695.3668
Rangeley Lakes National Scenic Byway	Rangeley Lakes National Scenic Byway Welcome Center (proposed)	PO Box 249	Oquossoc	207.864.7311
Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce	Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce (existing)	PO Box 167	South Paris	207.743.2281
Southern Piscataquis County Chamber of Commerce	Southern Piscataquis County Chamber of Commerce (existing)	PO Box 376	Dover-Foxcroft	207.564.7533
River Valley Chamber of Commerce	River Valley Chamber of Commerce (existing)	34 River St.	Rumford	207.364.3241
Rangeley Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce	Rangeley Region Chamber of Commerce (existing)	PO Box 317	Rangeley	207.864.5364
MAGIC	Katahdin Area Interpretive Center/Millinocket (TNC-proposed)	112 Main St. Suite 4	East Millinocket	800.648.4595
White Mountain National Forest	National Forest Information Center/Bethel (existing)	300 Glen Rd.	Gorham, NH	603.466.2713
Jackman-Moose River Chamber of Commerce	Jackman-Moose River Chamber of Commerce (existing)	PO Box 807	Jackman	207.668.4012
Jackman-Moose River Chamber of Commerce	Kennebec Chaudiere Interpretive Center/Jackman (proposed)	PO Box 807	Jackman	207.668.4012
Moosehead Lake Region Chamber of Commerce	Moosehead Lake Region Chamber of Commerce (existing)	PO Box 581, Rt. 15	Greenville	207.695.2702
Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce	Katahdin Area Chamber of Commerce (existing)	1029 Central St.	Millinocket	207.723.4443

Organization	Center Name	Address	Town	Telephone
Department of Transportation	Fryeburg State Visitor Information Center (proposed?)	16 State House Station	Augusta	207.287.2551
Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce	Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce (existing)	PO Box 439	Bethel	207.824.2282
Department of Transportation	State information Center/Jackman (proposed)			
AVCOG	State Information Center/Bethel (proposed)			
Sebasticook Valley Chamber of Commerce (Newport center)				
Lincoln Lakes Chamber of Commerce		PO Box 164	Lincoln	

Appendix D
Lodging Inventories

Appendix E Infrastructure Needs

DOT-related funding needs for Enhancements Projects (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2007)

Map Number	Site Name	On State Highway	Infrastructure needs	Infrastructure costs	Interpretation signage and other costs
Greenville Area Sites					
1	Little Moose Unit BP&L	Yes			\$10,000
2	Kennebec River Outlets of Moosehead Lake	Yes	Expanded parking	\$25,000	\$10,000
3	Mount Kineo	No			
4	NREC Interpretive Trails	Yes	Parking	\$40,000	\$5,000
5	West Shirley Bog	No			
	A Fierce Chase X-C Trails	No			
7	Borestone Mountain Audubon Sanctuary	No			
8	Peaks-Kenny State Park	Yes			\$10,000
9	AMC Katahdin Iron Works Property	No			
10	Gulf Hagus	No			
11	Pleasant River Walk	Yes			\$5,000
12	PCSWCD Demonstration Forest	No			
13	Lilly Bay State Park	No			
14	Big Spencer Mountain	No			
15	Namakanta Unit BP&L	No			
16	Seboies Unit BP&L	No			
32	Moosehead Marine Museum	Yes			
33	Moosehead Historical Museum	Yes			
34	Pittston Farm	No			
35	B-52 Site	No			
36	Katahdin Iron Works Historic Site	No			
	Route 16 South of Greenville - Moose watching pull off	Yes	Parking and observation structure	\$80,000	\$5,000
	Route 11 North of Brownville Moose watching pull off	Yes	Parking and observation structure	\$80,000	\$5,000
	All sites		Highway directional and wayfinding signs	\$75,000	
	Guide and map - writing, design, and printing (includes other Highlands Region sites as appropriate as sidebar stories)				\$40,000
	Subtotal			\$300,000	\$90,000

Other Highlands Region (other than Greenville Area) Sites					
17	Bait Hole X-C Trails	Yes	Parking	\$40,000	\$5,000
18	Jerry Pond Picnic Area	No			
19	Northern Timber Cruisers X-C Trails	No			
20	River Pond Nature Trail	No	Bicyclist support facilities	\$20,000	\$5,000
21	Ripogenus Gorge	No			
22	Medway Road	No			
23	Dolby Pond Picnic Area	Yes			\$5,000
24	Medway Recreational Park	Yes	Bicyclist support facilities	\$20,000	\$5,000
25	Grindstone Falls Picnic Area	Yes			\$5,000
26	Whetstone Falls campsites	No			
27	Shin Falls	No	Bicyclist support facilities	\$20,000	\$5,000
28	Seboies River Campsite	No			
29	Sawtelle Deadwater WMA	No			
30	Scraggly Lake Unit BP&L	No			
31	Baxter State Park North Entrance	No	Bicyclist support facilities and info kiosk	\$40,000	\$10,000
37	The Boom House	No			
38	Patten Lumber Museum	Yes			
	Improve aprox. 15 mi. of highway from Shin Pond to Baxter SP No. Gate for bicycle use by widening one shoulder (part of DOT Katahdin Loop - Shin Pond Trail)	No	Assume \$100,000/mile	\$1,500,000	
	Kathadin Loop Trail Audio Cassette/CD (based upon map/guide that DOT is preparing)		For Shin Pond, Medway and Grindstone Trails		\$75,000
	All sites that are on Kathadin Loop (including those on the Shin Pond, Medway and Grindstone Trail)		Highway directional and wayfinding signs	\$60,000	
	Subtotal			\$1,700,000	\$115,000

Western Maine Mountains					
1	Rangeley Lakes Historical Society	Yes			
2	Hatchery Brook	No			
3	Hunter Cove Wildlife Sanctuary	No			
4	Wilhelm Reich Museum	No			
5	Bald Mountain BP&L	No			
6	Big Falls	No			
7	Forest Legacy	Yes	Improved Parking	\$25,000	\$10,000
8	Aziscoos Mountain	Yes	Improved Parking	\$25,000	\$5,000
9	Rangeley Lake State Park	No			
10	Route 17 Overlook	Yes			\$10,000
11	The Bemis Trail	Yes	Improved Parking	\$25,000	\$5,000
12	Height of Land	Yes			\$5,000
13	Bemis Stream Trail	No			
14	Angel Falls	No			
15	Coos Canyon	Yes			\$5,000
16	SR&RL Rail Road	No			
17	Smalls Falls	Yes			\$5,000
18	Piazza Rock	Yes			\$5,000
19	Mountain Pond Trail	No			
20	Cascade Stream	No			
21	Dallas Hill Overlook	Yes	Kiosk	\$15,000	\$10,000
22	Rangeley Lakes Logging Museum	Yes	Improved Parking	\$25,000	\$5,000
23	Eustis Ridge Picnic Area	No			
24	Bigelow Unit BP&L	Yes			\$5,000
25	Narrow Gauge Trail	No			
	Route 16 between Rangeley and Stratton Moose viewing pull off	Yes	Parking and observation structure	\$80,000	\$5,000
	Route 16 west of Oquossoc Moose viewing pull off	Yes	Parking and observation structure	\$80,000	\$5,000
	National Scenic Byway Route 17 South of Height of Land Moose viewing pull off	Yes	Parking and observation structure	\$80,000	\$5,000
	National Scenic Byway Route 4 South of Rangeley Moose viewing pull off	Yes	Parking and observation structure	\$80,000	\$5,000
	All sites		Highway directional and wayfinding signs	\$75,000	
	Guide and map - writing, design, and printing				\$40,000
	Subtotal			\$510,000	\$130,000

Western Maine and Highlands Region					
	Linking existing visitor centers with real time reporting and consistently themed exhibits; and facilitate info sharing with 511 system and state welcome centers on I-95		Assumes \$50,000 per site for up to 11 sites		\$550,000
	Construct new Natural Resources Ed Ctr (NREC) in Greenville area - shown here are DOT costs only. See detailed fact sheet including matching funds and on-going operational support proposed by community, forest products industry, state agencies, and NGOs			\$2,500,000	\$250,000
	Subtotal			\$2,500,000	\$800,000

Downeast Region					
	Sunrise Trail improvements - infrastructure needs have been detailed by DOT studies and costs are not shown here.		Assumes decision is made to create trail		\$200,000
	Support DEHC interpretative exhibit development that links thematic exhibits in museum with itineraries leading from museum				\$250,000
	Sites on itinerary from DEHC		Highway directional and wayfinding signs	\$75,000	
	Itineraries guides and maps - writing, design, and printing				\$60,000
	Subtotal			\$75,000	\$510,000
	Total			\$5,085,000	\$1,645,000

Appendix F

Tourism & Hospitality Institute

Purpose: The Tourism and Hospitality Institute (T&HI) is a private non-profit organization formed to educate, train and provide technical assistance to tourism and hospitality businesses and their employees. This type of technical assistance and education is currently offered on a sporadic basis in specific geographic locations, thus limited in its availability to the private sector businesses and organizations.

Structure: The T&HI is organized and managed by a board of directors who are interested in furthering knowledge within the tourism and hospitality industry for the purpose of accomplishing true tourism economic development. The board recognizes the predilection of tourism & hospitality owners, managers and employees who enter the arena with minimal background and/or training in the multitude of skills required for entrepreneurial, management and front line success.

The T&HI instruction is accomplished by a consortium of educators and instructors with expertise in a multitude of technical areas who can be contacted for instruction, programs and educational purposes through the Institute. The Institute organizes and coordinates educational programs for any business or organization wishing to take advantage of the available options. Educational and technical assistance offerings will change as new instructors are brought into the organization.

Instructional Staff: The T&HI will meet with instructors a minimum of twice annually to share, discuss and fine tune the mechanics and logistics of the Institute's offerings. These instructional staff meetings will also be an opportunity for instructors to share challenging instructional situations and to learn from each other best practices in making adult instruction more enjoyable, interesting and challenging.

Delivery Mechanisms: The T&HI offers its programming for the convenience of the industry through two different models.

1) Some specific programming is offered at a predetermined date, time and location and is advertised to the business community. For example, front line employee programs such as restaurant, housekeeping and front desk certifications, and guide training are typically available on a regularly established basis in the spring and late fall months. Pricing in this case is on a per student basis that covers the cost of course materials, instructional staff, room, snacks, travel, etc. The per student cost may be paid by an employer or by the individual.

2) Any of the T&HI program options are also available onsite to any individual business or group of businesses who wish to work together for training or technical assistance purposes. In this case, the business or group of businesses, agree to cover the costs of the program which includes travel, lodging, out-of-pocket expenses, instructional staffing, etc. Pricing is determined based upon all of the variables and varies with travel arrangements, specific program, length of course, etc.

Course Offerings: T&HI course offerings change frequently as new, qualified instructors with industry background are brought into the group. It is a pre-requisite that instructors have practical experience within their area of instruction.

Current Programs available through Tourism & Hospitality Institute

1. Certifications Programs for Front Line Employees:

AH&LA Certification/pin received after completing exam & skills proficiency on hospitality property.

These **mini-courses are 6-8 hours in length** and can be offered in one complete day. Skills must be mastered through on-property mentoring immediately following the course. Final testing is done about a month later. An alternate way to offer this program is in two separate 4 hour sessions with skills mentoring handled on property after the course is completed. In either event, the final testing cannot be done until after the completion of the training sessions and the on-property skill sets.

This program helps to accomplish several things:

- 1) Raise the aspirations of existing employees;
- 2) Help to retain existing employees by offering them a career path to higher skill levels;
- 3) Encourages some employees to enroll in operations and management diploma courses for further educational skills and keeps them moving up within the hospitality industry, and hopefully within their property.
- 4) Fosters the values of life-long learning and professionalism within the hospitality industry.
- 5) Begins to foster the vision that a particular community can become known for having the friendliest and best trained hospitality workforce in the state.

Food & Beverage Certifications:

a. Restaurant Server*

Course Description: This eight-hour course reviews the basic knowledge needed by all employees of any hospitality property, including personal appearance, bloodborne pathogens, emergency situations, ADA and more. Participants also focus on knowledge required by all food & beverage personnel including telephone courtesy, security, kitchen safety, alcoholic beverage terms, brands, categories, abbreviations, laws, service and pricing. OSHA regulations, menus, food preparation terms and timing, plate presentation, tipping, First Aid, sanitation, and Health regulations.

The section is followed by information specific to restaurant servers including teamwork, performance standards, suggestive selling and upselling, food & beverage terms, glassware types, china, silverware, linens and napkin folding, standard drink ingredients and garnishes, ordering for drinks, anticipating guests' needs, standard table setups, table preparation, sidework and par stocks. Participants will be given skills books that will be taken back to their property mentor to oversee and sign off on the completion of each skill set. After successful completion of

the full day course, the skill sets and the final exam, the student will receive a certificate for Restaurant Server.

b. Busperson*

Course Description: This eight-hour course initially reviews the basic knowledge needed by all employees of any hospitality property, including personal appearance, bloodborne pathogens, emergency situations, ADA and more. Participants also focus on knowledge required by all food & beverage personnel including telephone courtesy, security, kitchen safety, alcoholic beverage terms, brands, categories, abbreviations, laws, service and pricing. OSHA regulations, menus, food preparation terms and timing, plate presentation, tipping, First Aid, sanitation, and Health regulations.

This section is followed by information specific to Bus Persons including teamwork, performance standards, food & beverage equipment terms, glassware types and use, china, silverware, linens and napkin folding, anticipating guests' needs, standard table setups, sidework, and par stocks. Participants are given skills books that will be taken back to their property mentor to oversee and sign off on the completion of each skill set. After successful completion of the full day course, the skill sets and the final exam, the student will receive a certificate for Bus Persons.

c. Banquet Server (own curriculum)

d. Banquet Setup (own curriculum)

e. Bartender (own curriculum)

f. Cocktail Server (own curriculum)

g. Room Service Attendant (own curriculum)

h. Kitchen Steward (own curriculum)

Rooms Division Certifications:

a. Room Attendant*

b. Laundry Attendant*

c. Public Space Cleaner*

Course Description: Housekeeping: This eight-hour course initially reviews the basic knowledge needed by all employees of any hospitality property, including personal appearance, bloodborne pathogens, emergency situations, ADA and more. General Housekeeping knowledge will include teamwork, telephone courtesy, security, keys, OSHA regulations, proper use of cleaning supplies, maintenance needs and inventories. The more specific room attendant program discusses superior performance standards, tips, unusual guestroom situations, deep-cleaning and room status codes. Participants are given skills books to be taken back to their property mentor to oversee and sign off the completion of each skill set. After successful completion of the full day course, the skill sets and the final exam, the student will receive a certificate for Room Attendant. Because most hospitality properties use room attendants to perform all the skills for letters a-c, we combine these three sessions in one day for more efficiency. (3 separate certifications)

d. Front Desk*

Course Description: This eight-hour course reviews the basic knowledge needed by all employees of any hospitality property, including personal appearance, bloodborne pathogens, emergency situations, ADA and more. Participants then focus on knowledge required by all

Front Office Employees such as telephone courtesy, security, property policies, giving directions, airport transportation, OSHA and more. This section is followed by information specific to front desk employees such as functioning as a team, the telephone system, room inventory and occupancy terms, room rates, check-in and check-out guidelines, credit approvals and VIP treatment. Participants are then given skills books that will be taken back to their property mentor to oversee and sign off on the completion of each skill set. After successful completion of the full day course, the skill sets and the final exam, the student will receive a certificate for Front Desk Skills.

- e. Reservationist (own curriculum)
- f. Concierge (own curriculum)
- g. Bell Attendant (own curriculum)
- h. Property Maintenance (curriculum available)

2. Customer Service Courses:

- a. Basic Hospitality Customer Service*

Course Description:

This eight hour course reviews all aspects of customer service on a hospitality property. Discussions focus on the cycle of guest service, dealing with guest expectations, quality, value and cost, drivers of guest satisfaction, how environment affects the guest, communication and interaction with the guests, the power of a smile, delivering service, managing the wait, dealing with challenging guests, service failures, and service excellence. Participants discuss case studies and resolve real property service dilemmas. After successful completion of the full day course, the student will receive a certificate for Customer Service.

- b. Retail Customer Service Refresher**

Same as above with a definite retail perspective.

- c. Advanced Customer Service (course under development)

Course Description: The course that is under development will build upon the basics of customer service to deal specifically with challenging customer situations. This session will incorporate role playing and practice session to help employees learn to think quickly on their feet as a situation confronts them.

3. Destination Training for The Maine Highlands * (specific to the community/region, requires tailoring each new venue)

Course Description: Regional Destination Training:

This eight hour course provides basic information for service personnel to be able to explain effectively the many things to do within The Maine Highlands and Downeast Acadia tourism regions of Maine. Front line hospitality personnel are in the position to be asked about regional activities and attractions on a daily basis. This program gives participants a multitude of valuable and informative responses to the question, “What is there to do around here?” and will help to keep visitors active within our tourism region. Participants will learn a wealth of information about activities in their regional neighborhood. After successful completion of the full day course and the final exam, the students will receive a certificate for Destination Information Training. (This course can be tailored for any specific region for a specific cost.)

4. How to Create Your Own Regional Destination Training (a “train the trainer” program)

Course Description: This session will save you tremendous time and energy by teaching you to create your own individualized destination training program for information providers across your specific tourism region. We will discuss mechanisms that work and those that do not. We will focus on ways to keep an adult audience engaged and having fun as they learn and teach each other about the highlights of their own region.

5. How to Plan a Festival or Event without Losing Your Mind!*

Course Description: This session covers all aspects of preparation for an event or festival including doing your research, getting organized, creating a timeline, determining location, examining site requirements, establishing committees, setting a budget, planning for sponsorships, wrapping up after the event and determining economic impacts. This session is a great opener for the morning, followed by the dual sessions listed below on trade show booths for a full day program.

Length: 3 hours

5. How to Create & Design a Trade Show Booth & How to Work a Trade Show Booth*

Course Description: The session covers everything from selecting a show to setting goals and objectives, examining your strengths & weaknesses, your target audience, determining pre and post show promotions, fine tuning your message, measuring your success, determining staffing needs, responsibilities, planning tools and looking at design considerations.

The second half of this session delves into staffing and space issues, traits that you need in staff, preparation & training for selling, fighting fatigue on the show floor, collecting leads, demonstrations, giveaways, booth theming and analyzing & evaluating the results.

Length: 4 hours

6. How Tourism Works in Maine*

Course Description: This program explains how tourism functions in a State that has an extremely complex network of tourism providers. This is great for people new to the tourism business in Maine or for people trying to succeed in their tourism business. **Length: 2 hrs.**

7. Tourism Economic Development*

Course Description: This session explains the differences between tourism marketing and tourism economic development efforts using case study examples. **Length: 2 hrs.**

8. Guides Training:

a. How to Run a Successful Guide Business*

Course Description: This course covers the history of guiding in Maine, the market for guide services, how guiding fits into the tourism picture, identification of a niche, legal, financial, insurance and tax issues for business people, who is the customer and where do you find them, how do you handle the customer, aspects of marketing, staying in touch and adding value.

Length: 6-8 hours

*** These courses are already developed and have been delivered.**

**** Developed, but not yet delivered.**

Appendix G

Draft Guiding Principles for Experiential Tourism Development in Maine

Introduction

Tourism in Maine takes many shapes, and clearly no traveler's vacation experience focuses exclusively on one specific activity. One collection of tourist activities that is garnering increased attention, however, centers around travelers who are particularly interested in experiencing a region's cultural, historical, and nature-based attractions. Given the range of activities associated with these attractions, collecting them under the umbrella of a single sector name has proven difficult. That difficulty has been compounded by the fact that discussion of these activities involves considerations such as their current and potential impact on the natural and human environments associated with them.

For the purposes of this document, and in an attempt to apply an effective "label" to these combined activities as thought is given to the principles that should guide the planning and development of them at the state, regional, and local levels, they will be gathered under the umbrella of "experiential tourism". Broadly speaking, experiential tourism includes activities that draw people outdoors such as hunting, fishing, birding and other wildlife viewing, hiking, camping, learning about the history of a region, and nature photography, in addition to other cultural, historical, or nature-based activities.

Background

While it has assumed several responsibilities since its creation, the initial purpose for the Maine Tourism Commission's Natural Resources Committee (NRC) was to develop a better understanding of the relationship between tourism and Maine's natural resources and related industries. To begin the NRC's process, the decision was made to reach out to as many stakeholders as possible across the state in order to get a sense of the issues, concerns, and ideas from people "on the ground" in both the tourism and recreation sectors and in those industries, communities, and organizations which played a significant role in tourism activities. Throughout the summer of 2003, over 40 key stakeholders (as identified by the NRC) from across the state were interviewed for purposes of helping the NRC develop as comprehensive an understanding as possible of the potential economic opportunities, environmental impacts, and political conflicts that could accompany the development of experiential tourism across the state.

The notes from those interviews were reviewed and summarized with an eye toward identifying Issues and Opportunities as they relate to Maine's natural resource assets, tourism-related businesses, and the communities in which tourism plays a significant role. The NRC also sought to identify Issues and opportunities as they relate to state investment and infrastructure development. For purposes of the committee's initial discussions, the summaries were further "honed" to highlight the primary themes found throughout the interviews. Most recently, the NRC took the identified primary themes and, incorporating the expertise and considerations of the committee's members, developed the follow Guiding Principles for Experiential Tourism

These Principles have been identified as those key considerations that should guide discussion at the state, regional, and local level concerning the opportunities and challenges that come with

experiential tourism development. In developing these Principles, the NRC hopes to enhance the thoroughness of the deliberations that invariably accompany development discussions by identifying in advance the considerations that should be factored equally into the policy-making processes at all levels.

State Support

State Support of Experiential Tourism Businesses

Many experiential tourism entrepreneurs are trying to create year-round businesses and jobs in poor, rural areas of Maine that have not developed the economic diversity of other, more populated parts of the state. In view of the role that nature-based, cultural, and historical tourism can play in rural economies, the state should offer a comprehensive set of incentives and assistance for entrepreneurs who want to improve and enhance the tourism economy in ways that complement and enhance the state's efforts to develop a broad-based experiential tourism strategic plan. As part of overall planning and development efforts, the state should work to engender and maintain a regulatory environment that both supports carefully planned development and ensures comprehensive protection of the myriad natural resources that are used in experiential tourism activities.

Planning

Community Commitment to Planning

Given the abundance of cultural, historical, and natural resource-based assets across Maine, as well as the existing and emerging activities that are associated with them, many communities will want to take advantage of existing resources for new experiential tourism opportunities as they are found in their regions. The effective utilization of these assets as attractive tourism destinations, however, requires a clear understanding of the tourism marketplace. Therefore, community leaders should commit to a realistic assessment of what their assets are, what special market niche they might fill, and whether or not the leadership (organizational or individual) and financial resources are available to facilitate the development of those assets into a tourism strategic plan and ultimately into effective tourism destinations.

Moreover, leaders at the state, county, and local level, as well as stakeholders within the private sector, should understand the complexity and inter-relatedness of the Maine tourism system so that planning can be conducted with an understanding of how tourism works across the state. To that end, communities should incorporate tourism development planning into the development and utilization of local comprehensive plans.

Statewide Tourism Planning and Development

In order for Maine's communities and tourism regions to benefit from an acceptable and appropriate expanded range of tourism development possibilities, the State of Maine needs to formalize its leadership role in the development of a statewide strategic plan for nature-based and other forms of experiential tourism. While MOT's current promotional mandate is critical to promoting Maine as a travel destination to out-of-state visitors, a strategy based exclusively on marketing and promotion does not effectively address the needs that accompany local business development opportunities, nor does it support the strengthening of regional tourism

destinations. The informal approaches that have brought some counties, regions and the state to the current threshold of development possibilities are also largely ad hoc and fragmented and will likely not serve stakeholders well over the long-term. Communities and regions across the state, as well as private entrepreneurs, will benefit from a more comprehensively supported and integrated approach to long-term tourism economic development planning.

The Role of the Office of Tourism Marketing

Given the ever-changing tourism marketplace, and in keeping with the identified need for statewide tourism development planning, the state should consider expanding the mandate of the Office of Tourism. Currently, MOT can only promote out-of-state, but local economies have much to gain from the tourism revenues generated by Maine citizens traveling inside the state. Clearly, current state budget constraints make significant expansion of MOT unlikely in the near-term, but at the very least the state should consider enlarging MOT's mandate so it can promote within the State of Maine.

Ecotourism Quality Labeling

Given the increasing attention being given to the economic benefits of environmental quality, or eco, labeling in tourism marketplaces around the world, MOT, as part of an expanded marketing capacity, should facilitate a multi-stakeholder discussion focused on developing a voluntary ecotourism certification program that could be used to market a range of Maine's experiential tourism opportunities.

Product Development

At the same time as MOT's marketing mandate is enlarged, so ideally should MOT also be expanded to include an official capacity for tourism economic development planning and support. Nature-based, cultural, and historical sites may be the magnet for experiential tourism development, but effective destinations also include outstanding dining, lodging, and shopping opportunities. In addition to a more comprehensive marketing effort, then, MOT and DECD should be more proactive in working with other state agencies, as well as with regional and local entities across the state, in supporting, linking, and marketing a greater array of destinations that will attract experiential tourism consumers.

Partnerships

Cross-sector cooperation (networking) and coordinated strategic planning:

Effective tourism development requires networking on the local, county, regional, and state levels. It is critical to sustainable tourism that all state, regional and local entities involved in tourism find ways to work in a coordinated and strategically planned manner.

- On the local level there should be adequate organizational infrastructure to handle all tourism issues, including visitor services, infrastructure planning, building, maintenance, signage, and much more on a daily basis.
- On the State level, there should be effective coordination of the myriad natural resource departments, staffs, and economic development and marketing efforts that will help to coordinate and add value to the individual community efforts.

- State resource agencies can and should work in concert with the local community and regional stakeholders to produce results approved and agreed upon by all. State agencies should also work in a more collaborative manner in assisting nature-based tourism businesses. Existing linkages between the Departments of Agriculture, Conservation, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Marine Resources, and the Office of Tourism should be strengthened in order to ensure the development of balanced and appropriate experiential tourism opportunities. Those same linkages should also be used to ensure ongoing protection of the state's natural resources.
- The many appropriate state owned lands should be utilized to showcase best practices in tourism development efforts. This approach would produce benefits for the state, the tourism industry, and local communities. Furthermore, key new state acquisitions should be identified and targeted as part of this effort.

Public/Private Financial support:

All tourism development requires a significant financial investment on many levels. Investment by local entrepreneurs is certainly required, but there is also a need for the community to invest in the infrastructure required to ensure a successful visitor experience. When tourists visit destinations, they bring with them all of their ongoing physical needs and impacts. Increased demand is placed on the local physical and social infrastructure, such as parking facilities, health services, police and fire protection, when there is an influx of visitors to any community. Thus, there must be state and community support to cover those additional infrastructural costs.

Public/Private Access Opportunities and Partnerships:

Given the proportion of the Maine landscape that is private property, tourism development efforts at all levels should remain mindful of the traditions and partnerships that are essentially unique to Maine in the United States. Forest and agricultural landowners are critical partners in the effort to keep nature-based activities of all types available to a broad range of stakeholders, and maintaining those partnerships will be an essential part of maintaining and developing nature-based and other experiential tourism opportunities. With that goal in mind, tourism development planners and practitioners should remain as flexible as possible in considering new ways of partnering with private landowners while bearing in mind the rights of property owners and the responsibilities that accompany the privilege of using private property.

Access

Given the increasing concern over the ability of nature-based tourism businesses to retain access to the natural landscapes critical to their economic survival, and in addition to maintaining and enhancing the public/private partnerships described above, the state should continually explore all possible avenues, ranging from economic incentives to recreational easements to public land acquisitions, to ensuring continued access to, and the existence of, large-scale recreational landscapes and wildlife habitats, both inland and on the coast.

Moreover, given the diverse range of stakeholders who have an interest in using the Maine landscape for a broad variety of recreational purposes, consistent communication should be maintained in forums such as the Sportsmen/Forest Landowners Alliance and the recently re-formed Governor's Council on Sportsmen's Landowner Relations.

Developing an Understanding of Carrying Capacity

In a partnership among state agencies, the University of Maine's Center for Tourism Research and Outreach (CENTRO), local communities, and private sector stakeholders, research should be conducted into the ecosystem and host community carrying capacities of the regions and locations that are prime candidates for experiential tourism development. The goal should be to develop an agreed upon understanding of carrying capacity, as well as an accompanying understanding of the limits of acceptable change, that enables the optimal use of Maine's natural resources by a broad range of stakeholders and interested parties while ensuring that these resources are kept productive for current generations and sustained for future generations. This understanding of carrying capacity should encompass the full spectrum of issues and opportunities as they are found in ecosystems and host communities across the state.

Education: Business Outreach and Frontline Worker Training

There is a critical role for the State to play at every level of sustainable tourism development. Both the general public and Maine policy makers should be educated regarding the economic benefits and value of experiential tourism, while individual host community residents should be informed of the array of potential opportunities and pitfalls involved in tourism development in order to develop effective and sustainable tourism policy. Visitors should recognize the range of considerations regarding diversified land and resource use, public access, the culture, heritage, the natural environment, as well as understand the inter-relationship between the working landscape, recreation, and activities such as wildlife viewing.

At the same time, business owners should be helped to understand and meet the challenges of the ever-changing tourism business, as well as the myriad issues that come with building and sustaining a viable tourism business. Such issues include the need for diversification of the tourism product, planning for changes in infrastructure, appropriate and cost-effective marketing methods, the economic benefits of collaboration and cooperation, tapping into new and appropriate market trends by creating new value-added quality visitor experiences, planning an approach to business development, and basic business skills.

Finally, in order to ensure a uniformly satisfactory experience for visitors to Maine, the frontline workforce should be trained in the critical area of customer service.





FERMATA, Inc.

Business Office

P.O. Box 196

Poultney, VT 05764

802.287.4284

www.fermatainc.com